

# The Atlantic Monthly

FEBRUARY 1994

**THE COMING ANARCHY:** NATIONS BREAK UP UNDER THE TIDAL FLOW OF REFUGEES FROM ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DISASTER. AS BORDERS CRUMBLE, ANOTHER TYPE OF BOUNDARY IS ERECTED—A WALL OF DISEASE. WARS ARE FOUGHT OVER SCARCE RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY WATER, AND WAR ITSELF BECOMES CONTINUOUS WITH CRIME, AS ARMED BANDS OF STATELESS MARAUDERS CLASH WITH THE PRIVATE SECURITY FORCES OF THE ELITES. A **PREVIEW** OF THE FIRST DECADES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. BY ROBERT D. KAPLAN



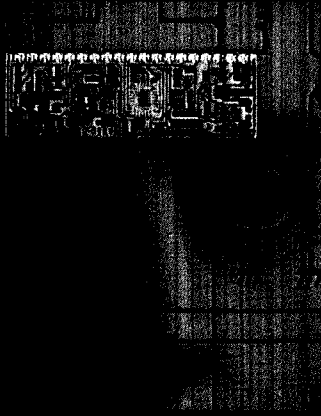
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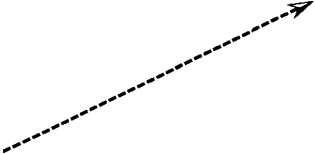
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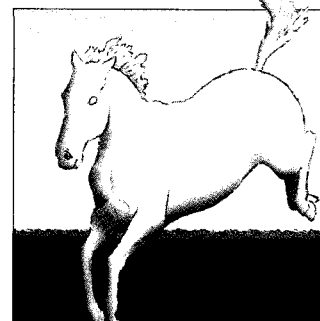




Page 110



Page 82



Page 77

## REPORTS

### 18 Notes & Comment: The Shock-Art Fallacy

Some shocking forms of expression are art. It is important to remember, the author writes, that some are not.

by Martha Bayles

### 21 Foreign Affairs: A Climate for Demagogues

Of all the problems facing the newly unified Germany, the most serious may be that it is effectively leaderless.

by Stephen Kinzer

### 35 Foreign Policy: Reagan and the Russians

A contrarian look at the claim that Ronald Reagan's defense buildup helped speed the Soviet Union's collapse.

by Richard Ned Lebow  
and Janice Gross Stein

## HUMOR, FICTION, & POETRY

### 77 The Irruption of Reality

A drawing  
by Guy Billout

### 80 Days

A poetry anthology  
by Mary Oliver, Jane  
Hirshfield, Phillis Levin,  
and Robert Campbell

### 44 The Coming Anarchy

The world, our correspondent writes, faces a period of unprecedented upheaval, brought on by scarce resources, worsening overpopulation, uncontrollable disease, brutal warfare, and the widespread collapse of nation-states and, indeed, of any semblance of government. Welcome to the twenty-first century.

by Robert D. Kaplan

### 82 Is There a Science of Success?

The motivation industry, as manifested in self-help and personal-development programs, is vast and protean, but through it runs a common assumption: that building up one's own will to succeed is in itself a crucial step toward success. Is there any truth to this proposition?

by Nicholas Lemann



### 99 Kathleen's Engagement A short story by Lynn Caraganis

### 100 The Celebrities A poem by Irving Feldman

## BOOKS

### 116 "The Saviour of His Country"

A review of four new books  
about Winston Churchill.

by Geoffrey Wheatcroft

### 123 Brief Reviews by Phoebe-Lou Adams

## ARTS & LEISURE

### 38 Travel: Prince Valiant's England

The author of the venerable  
comic strip visits landmarks  
of its setting.

by Cullen Murphy

### 104 Movies:

#### David Lean's Magnificent *Kwai*

The director David Lean aimed both high and wide—and perhaps for that reason never received the acclaim he deserves.

by Michael Sragow

### 110 Computers: Recognizable Characters

The promise that computers would lead to a "paperless office" has long remained unfulfilled. "Finally, though," the author writes, "two innovations . . . have brought us very close to the paperless world."

by James Fallows

## OTHER DEPARTMENTS

### 4 745 Boylston Street/ Contributors

### 8 Letters

### 16 The February Almanac

### 127 The Puzzler by Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon

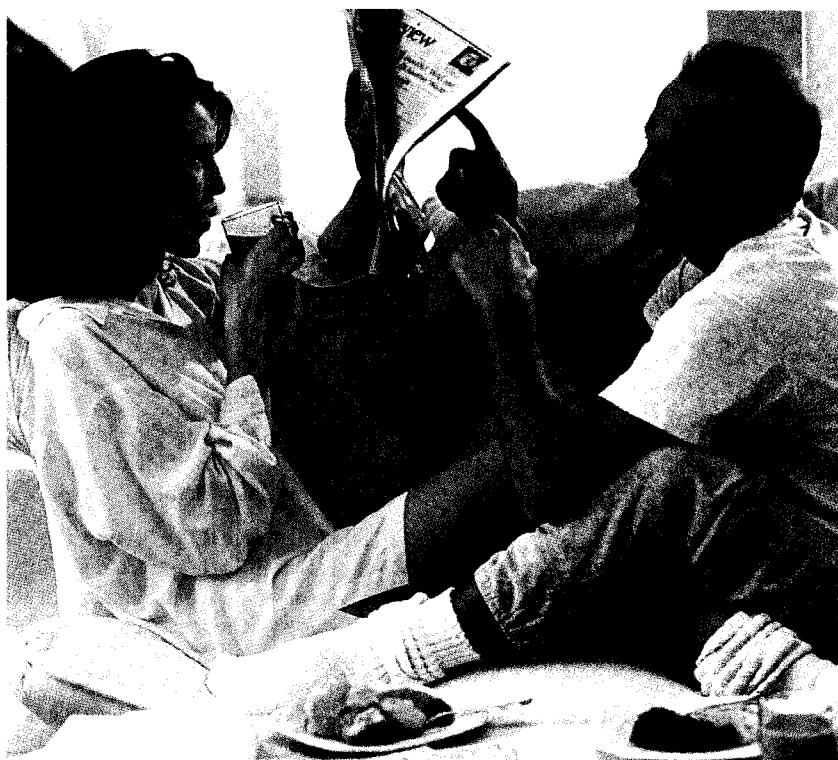
### 128 Word Watch by Anne H. Soukhanov

Cover art by  
Marvin Mattelson





*As Jim philosophized about  
women, I continued to sip my  
Baileys and coffee and read.  
Between  
the lines.*



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**I**N his travels on assignment for *The Atlantic Monthly*, Robert D. Kaplan has reported from Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and the former Yugoslavia—which together represent merely a fraction of the countries he has visited, often at some risk, during his two decades as a foreign correspondent. Kaplan's article in this issue of *The Atlantic* represents a summing-up: it describes not any one of the countries he knows but rather, in effect, all of them. It is a portrait of the world as it is coming to be, a world where unprecedented social, political, and environmental dysfunction constitutes the fabric of daily life.

This is a portrait that many of those who are charged with keeping an eye on foreign affairs are reluctant to paint—or, as Kaplan pointed out in a recent conversation, are perhaps incapable of painting, for sheer lack of firsthand observation. "Too many people in the foreign-policy community," he said, "even when they go to places like Africa, stay inside a protective bubble. They are met at the airport by embassy officials who ease them through customs, and they travel around the bush in a well-equipped four-wheel-drive vehicle with diplomatic

plates. They are not harassed at roadblocks by unruly soldiers."

Kaplan doesn't get met at airports; he travels bush-taxi class. In the months ahead he will be doing so in the Indian subcontinent and in Central Asia as he gathers material for a book that will treat many of the themes brought out in "The Coming Anarchy." Kaplan's most recent book, *The Arabists: The Romance*

*of an American Elite*, also grew out of an *Atlantic* cover story, "Tales From the Bazaar," which appeared in the August, 1992, issue. *The Arabists*, published last fall, has won praise—and in some quarters, inevitably, scorn—for the balance it maintains on a highly sensitive subject. Another book published by Kaplan last year, *Balkan Ghosts*, portions of which also appeared first in *The Atlantic*, at-

tempts to unravel the tangled strands of tragedy in the former Yugoslavia. It was named one of the best books of 1993 by *The New York Times Book Review*.

In all his work Kaplan combines scholarship, on-the-ground reporting, and a deep regard for the past in a way that transcends the headlines—and in a way that few other correspondents can match. —THE EDITORS



### CONTRIBUTORS

**Martha Bayles** ("The Shock-Art Fallacy") is a former television and arts critic for *The Wall Street Journal*. Her article in this issue is adapted from her book *Hole in Our Soul: The Loss of Beauty and Meaning in American Popular Music*, to be published in April by The Free Press.

**Robert Campbell** ("The Screened Porch") is the architecture critic for *The Boston Globe* and a co-author, with Peter Vanderwarker, of *Cityscapes of Boston: An American City Through Time* (1992).

**Lynn Caraganis** ("Kathleen's Engagement") is the author of *Garish Days* (1988) and *Cousin It* (1991).

**Irving Feldman** ("The Celebrities") teaches English literature at the State University of New York at Buffalo. His latest collection of poems, *The Life and Letters*, will be published this fall.

**Jane Hirshfield** ("The Love of Aged Horses"), a poet, is the author of *The Octo-*

*ber Palace* and the editor of *Women in Praise of the Sacred*, both of which will be published next month.

**Robert D. Kaplan** ("The Coming Anarchy") is a contributing editor of *The Atlantic*. His article in this issue will be expanded into a book he is writing for Random House, with support from the U.S. Institute of Peace and the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

**Stephen Kinzer** ("A Climate for Demagogues") is the chief of the *New York Times* bureau in Berlin.

**Richard Ned Lebow** ("Reagan and the Russians") is the director of the Program in International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. He is a co-author, with Janice Gross Stein, of *We All Lost the Cold War*, to be published this month.

**Phillis Levin** ("The Third Day") is an assistant professor of English and creative writing at the University of Maryland at College Park. She is the author of *Temples and Fields* (1988).

**Marvin Mattelson** (cover art) is a portrait painter and illustrator who teaches at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. His work has appeared in advertisements, on movie posters, on book covers, and in magazines.

**Mary Oliver** ("Mockingbirds") is the writer-in-residence at Sweet Briar College, in Virginia. She received the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1984 for her book *American Primitive*.

**Michael Sragow** ("David Lean's Magnificent Kwai") writes reviews for *The New Yorker's* "Movies in Brief" section.

**Janice Gross Stein** ("Reagan and the Russians") is the Harrowston Professor of Conflict Management and Negotiation at the University of Toronto. She is a co-author, with Richard Ned Lebow, of *We All Lost the Cold War*, to be published this month.

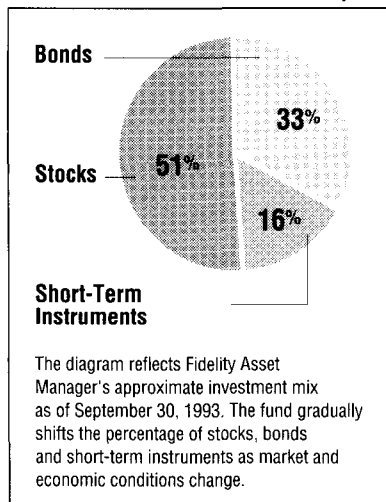
**Geoffrey Wheatcroft** ("The Saviour of His Country") writes for several London newspapers and is the author of *The Randalors* (1986).

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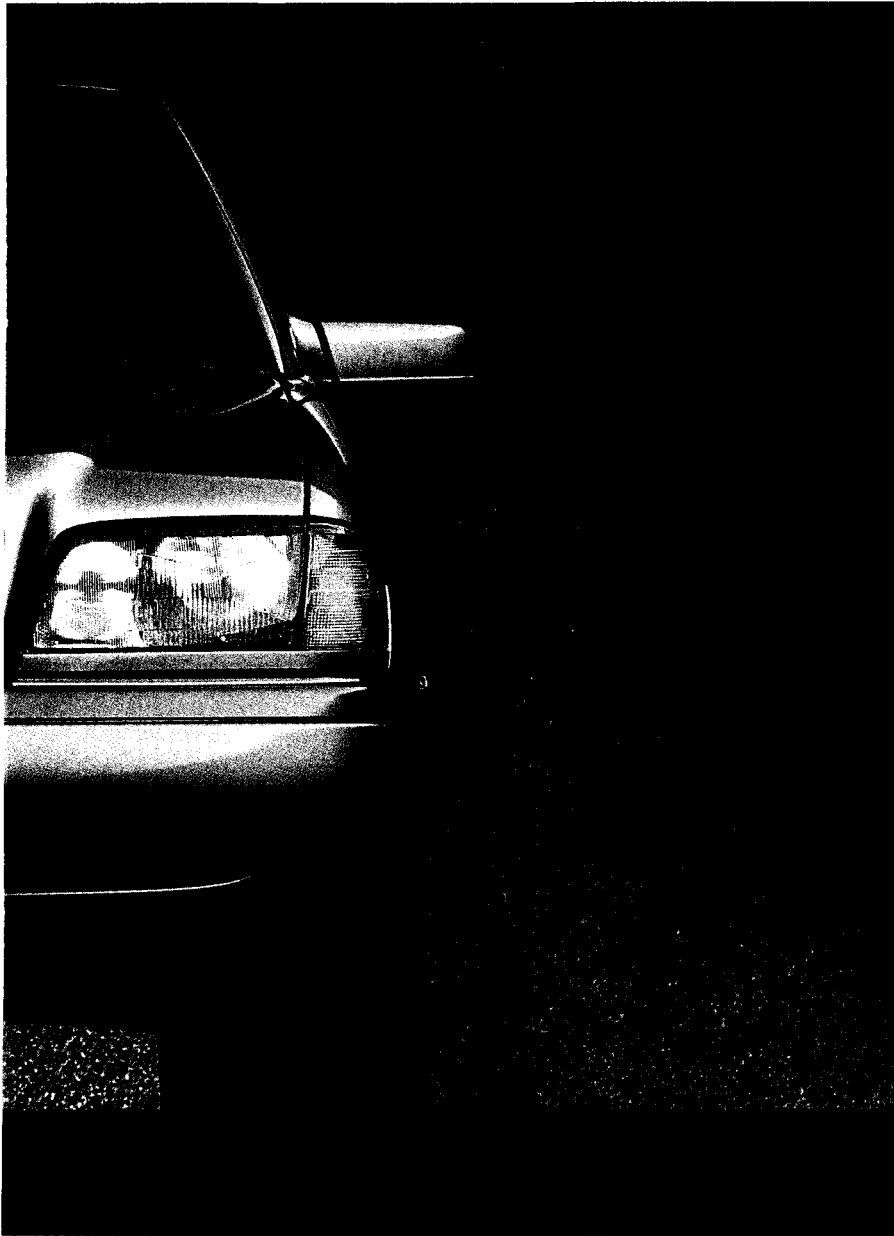
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## LETTERS

### Reverse Racism

**"R**everse Racism, or How the Pot Got to Call the Kettle Black," by Stanley Fish (November *Atlantic*), is described on the contents page as "a spirited rebuttal" to "the objections to affirmative action." It may be spirited, but in fact it is no rebuttal—it is simply a restatement of an old argument called "the end justifies the means," and it entirely misrepresents what affirmative action was set up to do in the first place. And that is too bad, because the impulse behind the concept of affirmative action is a sound one, and should be soundly defended.

Fish asserts that any group that has been the subject of oppression acquires the right to oppress other groups. Thus, he says, "the unfairness to Palestinian Arabs that arose from, but was not the chief purpose of, the founding of a Jewish state" is perfectly acceptable because of "the awful unfairness of Nazi extermination camps." This leads Fish to the position that because there was and is discrimination by whites against blacks in the United States, it is perfectly acceptable to replace it with discrimination in favor of blacks that disadvantages whites.

There are two major problems with this argument. First, it characterizes affirmative action as a form of oppression, which is an awful indictment of what Fish is, presumably, trying to defend. Second, it ignores the fact that any group that oppresses another can find justification for it in some kind of prior oppression, whether real or not. The Nazis, for example, justified their genocide with the argument that "authentic" Germans were economically enslaved by Jews, who controlled the wealth of the nation and were therefore subjugating the native population. There is more such drivel in the Nazis' rationale, but my point is not the content of the argument—it is the danger of allowing any such argument to be the basis for yet another form of op-

pression. One need only look at what is happening in what were Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, not to mention the Middle East, Cambodia, and Northern Ireland, to understand how easy it is to justify oppression using Fish's approach. So much for the Golden Rule.

The United States, flounder though it does, has expended enormous resources to attempt to establish the very equality of opportunity that Fish believes to be unimportant. This equality of opportunity may be fragile and uneven, but it is something that drives Americans in general, and drove those who have worked and suffered for generations to create an environment for blacks that would parallel that for whites. The idea was to be color-blind. It is a great moral and ethical principle, which distinguishes this country from others, and it should not be so lightly cast aside. We may be terribly flawed, but we are at least trying to figure out how not to be—in spite of advice like Fish's.

**John P. Field**  
*Dingman's Ferry, Pa.*

**S**tanley Fish's thesis, once known as the "backward-looking" argument, is that what may be perceived as wrongs or injustices perpetrated against white males in the present are justified as correcting manifest wrongs or injustices perpetrated against women, blacks, and other minorities in the past. Fish believes it sufficient to say, in effect, that the motives for discrimination are different.

This argument has tremendous emotional power but will not stand up to intellectual criticism, because of its unwarranted assumptions. First, the white males who perpetrated the worst injustices against women and blacks in the past by creating laws systematically discriminating against them are long dead, as are their victims; the white males who are being discriminated against in reverse now have generally committed no offenses against women and minorities. The beneficiaries of government programs to-



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## RECENTLY ON THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY ONLINE:

- ◆ In January a live conference with James Fallows, *The Atlantic's* Washington editor.
- ◆ In December a live conference with Nicholas Lemann, an *Atlantic* national correspondent, and Morgan Entrekin, the publisher of Grove/Atlantic, to discuss "In Search of Monster," from the December issue.

day are not as significantly harmed as their ancestors were; no one alive today has been "subjected . . . to decades of slavery."

Moreover, Fish doesn't deal with a number of other arguments against affirmative action: (1) affirmative action's benefits go disproportionately to those in targeted groups who are already relatively well off; (2) it has placed people in positions for which they are often marginally qualified or even unqualified, and therefore in danger of failing; (3) it further stigmatizes women and minorities by insinuating that they are helpless victims who cannot "make it" on their own, and making them wards of the state helps to reinforce, not eliminate, racial stereotypes; (4) it has sabotaged the language of the discussion and introduced an Orwellian universe of disinformational euphemisms: "equal opportunity" now means "preferential treatment," "discrimination" and "racist" now mean lack of statistical parity, *moral* language ("fair" representation, social "justice") is used to support manifestly *political* aims; (5) it has promoted an atmosphere of secrecy, dishonesty, and mistrust, both to keep white male job-seekers and the public as much in the dark as possible and to protect affirmative-action initiatives from serious criticism and legal challenge; (6) it has expanded to incorporate ever larger segments of the population, so that now roughly *two thirds* of the American public is in at least one "protected group," with no end in sight; (7) it manufactures "problems" out of whole cloth (such as the ridiculous argument about the relative lack of blacks in athletic front offices when they are earning multimillion-dollar salaries down on the playing field).

The situation is worse because (8) affirmative action has been a major contributing factor in the enormous buildup in the power of unelected and unaccountable federal judges and bureaucrats to dictate hiring practices, university admissions, and so forth, creating the climate for an increasingly fascist, centrally controlled society; (9) it has severely damaged race relations by incurring the resentment of the new "invisible victims," who, more and more, see what is going on and are refusing to play the bureaucratically designated role of sacrificial animal; (10) by lowering standards across the board it has nearly destroyed the public education sys-

tem from grade school on up, leading to the well-documented fact that many of today's graduates cannot read effectively, construct an intelligible paragraph, or do simple arithmetic, know no science, history, or geography, have few scruples about cheating, and have to be trained almost from scratch at a tremendous cost to employers, which is then passed on to consumers. Thus the socially engineered New World Order that a multitude of federal judges and government bureaucrats and the Stanley Fishes of the academic world are all working to create is actually threatening the ability of the United States to compete in the international markets of an increasingly global economy.

In sum, affirmative action may have begun with good intentions, but it has expanded into a sweeping agenda of social engineering which is, in the last analysis, incompatible with the principles on which a free society must be based. And what is the antidote? Asserting firmly and uncompromisingly that merit *exists*—a person is either capable of performing a job or not. Humans are by nature individuals, not merely group members; individuality cannot be engineered out of us like a bad habit. Finally, the injustices of affirmative action to white males not even born when the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed are *manifest*, and not merely *perceived*.

Steven Yates

University of South Carolina  
Columbia, S.C.

**S**tanley Fish grossly misleads readers when he quotes David Owen's observation that the "correlation between SAT scores and college grades . . . is lower than the correlation between weight and height." This statement is technically correct, but the aim of the SAT is not simply to predict college grades, it is to predict college *success*. The reason this distinction must be made is obvious. Colleges differ in quality, and a given college usually selects students within a relatively narrow range of SAT scores: an Ivy League school gets mostly students with high SAT scores, an average school gets mostly students with average SAT scores, and so on. These segregated students are then graded on a curve. The result, predictably, is that the SAT-grade correlation is not high.

Things are quite different, however, when we look at the much rarer cases of



open-enrollment colleges having students with a wide range of SAT scores. In this more representative sample of students the correlation between SAT scores and grades is high. It may therefore safely be said that students scoring high on the SAT are likely to do better academically than those scoring low. And this holds true, incidentally, regardless of race.

**B. W. Smith**  
*Los Angeles, Calif.*

**B**y enshrining inferior performance and allowing it preference in the intellectual marketplace, Stanley Fish does no favor to blacks. To the contrary, he ensures that they will be regarded with suspicion if not contempt for the rest of their careers.

Not holding blacks to equivalent standards can only devalue achievement and further contribute to the erosion of quality in our lives.

**Peter Grey**  
*Fort Lee, N.J.*

**I**f Stanley Fish really means what he says, he should immediately resign his ill-gotten, unmerited position as professor of English and law at Duke University so that it can be filled by someone from a group that has been "bought, sold, killed, beaten, raped, excluded, exploited, shamed, and scorned for a very long time."

**Lee Dembart**  
*San Francisco, Calif.*

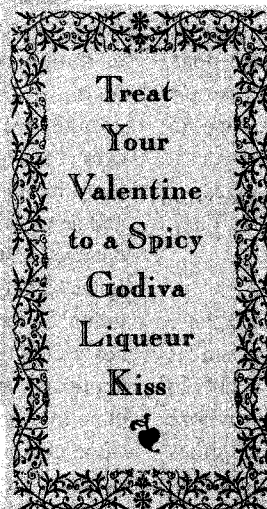
**T**hat human history includes many episodes of cruelty and barbarism is widely understood. That white people have often treated black people terribly in this country is not a matter of dispute. That white people should therefore subject themselves and their descendants to disadvantages in the workplace, in the schools, and under the law, however, is not a position that enlightened self-interest will permit them to take. If we are to accept the argument made by Stanley Fish that resistance to affirmative action is racism, that same logic compels us to conclude that racism, whatever that is, is a philosophy that should be embraced by whites.

**Erik Peterson**  
*Gresham, Oreg.*

## I N N O V A T I V E S P I R I T S

Valentine's Day is the ideal time to introduce someone you've liked for quite a while to the delights of Godiva Liqueur.

Take a hot tip from Chris Schlesinger, chef-owner of the super hip, always-crowded Boston-area restaurants East Coast Grill and The Blue Room, and author with John Willoughby of



The Thrill of the Grill, the new Salsas, Sambals, Chutneys, and Chowchows, and the forthcoming *Born Under a Hot Sun*: use the wonderful Indian spice cardamom. A bit pungent and a bit sweet, it adds just the right kind of heat to a romantic, semitropical Valentine's Day after-dinner drink.

### Spicy Godiva Liqueur Kiss

#### For two:

2 ounces Godiva Liqueur  
4 ounces raspberry liqueur  
6 ounces whole milk  
1 tablespoon whole cardamom pods (or 1/4 teaspoon freshly-grated nutmeg and 6 or 8 red-hot candies)

Whipped cream  
Raspberries

In a small saucepan roast cardamom pods over medium heat for two or three minutes. Remove pan from heat at the first hint of smoke.

Wipe out the drum of an electric coffee grinder with a damp paper towel; if it's very dirty, grind a few tablespoons of sugar in it for fifteen seconds or so and wipe out the sugar. Be sure to clean the cover, too.

With your fingers shell the cardamom seeds

and pour them into the grinder. Process them until they are as fine as sugar—in granules with a bit of character, that is, not powdery like flour. Scrape out the ground spice into a small jar: any leftovers will make a fine garnish for rice pudding, hot cocoa, or Godiva Liqueur. (Clean out your coffee grinder again, unless you want flavored coffee—not such a bad idea.)

Pour Godiva Liqueur, raspberry liqueur, and milk into two tall, thin glasses. Sprinkle a healthy pinch of ground cardamom over the surface. If you can't find cardamom (it's also available pre-ground), grate some fresh nutmeg and float three or four red-hot candies on top. Garnish with whipped cream and fresh raspberries, if desired. Serve to someone you're very fond of.



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Certainly nobody with a shred of common sense considers the anger of oppressed minorities to be morally equivalent to the evil of their oppressors, and a moment's reflection makes it obvious that "reverse racism" is simply an unfortunate misnomer.

I had hopes for the efficacy of properly structured affirmative-action programs, but I fear greatly for the long-term social consequences after learning that affirmative action was instrumental in denying Stanley Fish an administrative post, thereby consigning him to the classroom and consequently extinguishing hope for the education of our next generation.

G. D. Chakerian  
Davis, Calif.

*Stanley Fish replies:*

The point of the essay to which these letters respond is that "reverse racism" is an unfortunate phrase because it fails to distinguish between inequities whose production is intentional and inequities that follow in the wake of a policy not designed to generate them. It was the express purpose of some powerful white Americans to disenfranchise, enslave, and, later, exploit black Americans. It was *what they set out to do*, whereas the proponents of affirmative action did not set out to deprive your friend's cousin's son of a place at Harvard.

The distinction is not a difficult one, but it is missed or ignored by John P. Field, who writes, "Fish asserts that any group that has been the subject of oppression acquires the right to oppress other groups." The right, if there is one, is the right to a remedy. Oppression is not the agenda here; affirmative action is not a revenge strategy—even if it is experienced as such by those who are caught up in the backwater of its effects. It is true, as Steven Yates asserts, that these accidental "victims" pay a price for wrongs they did not inflict, but they are also the beneficiaries of those wrongs, in that the advantages they enjoy were made possible by the discriminatory acts of which they are innocent. If they do not "deserve" to be deprived of their privileged positions, neither do they "deserve" their possession of them in the first place. There is enough fairness and unfairness to go around.

Yes, one might say, life is unfair; but there is a difference, is there not, between unfairness brought about by a political

agenda like affirmative action and unfairness that follows from the application of a neutral, nonpolitical standard like the standard of merit? Merit is not a measure that stands apart from (or can be opposed to) contending partisan agendas; rather, it is a prize in the war, and you win when you get to define merit in accordance with your own view of what is valuable.

That is what happened in the period between 1925 and 1965. Merit became narrowly identified with the skills and modes of thinking measured by standardized tests, and decisions made on other grounds were regarded as suspect. Recently, however, merit has been increasingly recognized as having many faces, and some colleges have abandoned standardized tests as a requirement for entry. Bates College, in Maine, is one such institution, and after five years its experiment has yielded a large increase in minority applicants and matriculants with no decline in academic performance. "We became interested," the dean of admissions explains, "in other potential definitions of intelligence—spatial, artistic, musical, kinesthetic, body, emotional, and ethical." The dean's point is mine: "intelligence," like "merit," is not a natural but a constructed measure, the content of which will vary with the various goals one has decided to embrace. You might want a student body composed wholly of good test-takers who can solve puzzles and spot analogies, but then again, you might not.

That is my basic objection to the phrase "reverse racism": by equating oppressive agendas with the efforts to mitigate their effects, it discourages any serious consideration of the injuries affirmative action seeks to redress. It is a double strategy in which the policy of affirmative action is simultaneously deflated and inflated. It is deflated by attributing to it a base goal, the goal of collapsing merit into race. But that deflation is also an inflation, because it exaggerates the ambition of the policy and thereby makes it into the specter of everyone's fears. Once this two-sided caricature has been produced—and it is produced the moment the phrase "reverse racism" is invoked—it can be indignantly rejected, and rejected with it is the moral urgency that made people want to do something in the first place.

The same strategy of caricature and dismissal is directed at me by Lee Dembart when he declares that if I really

mean what I say, I should "immediately resign" my "ill-gotten, unmerited position . . . at Duke University" so that it can be filled by a minority member. Here I am saddled with a position I would never take—that people should be hired "simply because they happen to belong to a particular group"—and then asked (no, dared) to submit to the logic of something I did not say. What I do say is that group membership might reasonably be an *ingredient* in the selection process, not as a special favor but as a recognition of the positive contribution such groups might make to an ongoing enterprise that has not one but many goals.

To be sure, once I have said that, many things might responsibly be said in return, but the demand that I resign would not be one of them. That is not a serious point; it is a debating point, a forensic trick designed to pin me to a wall it has erected. I decline it for the same reason I decline the gambit represented by the phrase "reverse racism": it fails to take the measure of the difficulties of our present situation; it does not do the job; it does not do anything but take satisfaction in its own click and snap. Surely we need and deserve more than that.

## Prostate Cancer

Charles C. Mann's article "The Prostate-Cancer Dilemma" (November *Atlantic*) is flawed in that it ignores radiation therapy, which is a proven and important treatment for prostate cancer, with both a high success rate and few side effects. For many patients, especially older patients and those with pathologically aggressive tumors, radiation therapy is the treatment of choice for both early and advanced prostate cancer.

Studies have tracked patients for as long as ten to fifteen years after treatment with either radiation or surgery. For patients with early prostate cancer, survival and relapse rates are the same with either treatment. For many patients, however, surgery is clearly the wrong treatment. For example, contrary to Mann's report, studies have shown that patients with poorly differentiated tumors have a very high risk of recurrence in the area of the prostate following radical prostatectomy. These patients often need radiation treatment post-operatively when local relapse



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occurs. They should have been treated with radiation therapy in the beginning and thus been spared the side effects of surgery.

Radiation therapy, unlike surgery, has no treatment-associated mortality. Potency is preserved (in those who were potent prior to treatment) in 70 to 75 percent of patients. This compares favorably with even the best nerve-sparing surgery (72 percent by Dr. Walsh, 52 percent by Dr. Catalona). Incontinence is unusual (one percent) compared with surgical results (five to 10 percent, although Dr. Walsh has said that his incontinence rate is 2.5 percent). Radiation treatment has its own side effects, and is the cause of chronic proctitis (which is manifested by painless rectal bleeding) in a small percentage of patients.

**Shari Rudoler, M.D.**  
*Philadelphia, Pa.*

**C**harles C. Mann presents a difficult subject in a balanced manner. It is true that we in the United States take a more aggressive approach toward prostate cancer than do people in many European

countries. As the author mentions, budget constraints in some countries, along with different cultural attitudes toward illness and death, are among the reasons for this difference. Americans tend to be aggressive and proactive in their approach to health care. As a urologist, I find it difficult not to order a PSA level on most men over the age of fifty. This is because many men, or their wives, insist on a PSA test, because of the unending and often misguided media barrage of health-care information. Indeed, the very issue of *The Atlantic* in which Mann's article appears contains an advertisement by Merck warning of the possibility of prostate cancer. Furthermore, one of the leading causes of malpractice lawsuits is the failure to diagnose cancer.

The debate about when, whether, and how to treat prostate cancer will continue. Nevertheless, anyone who maintains that prostate cancer does not need to be treated should try spending some time with a man who is dying a miserable death from that disease.

**Gary L. Berger, M.D.**  
*Port Charlotte, Fla.*

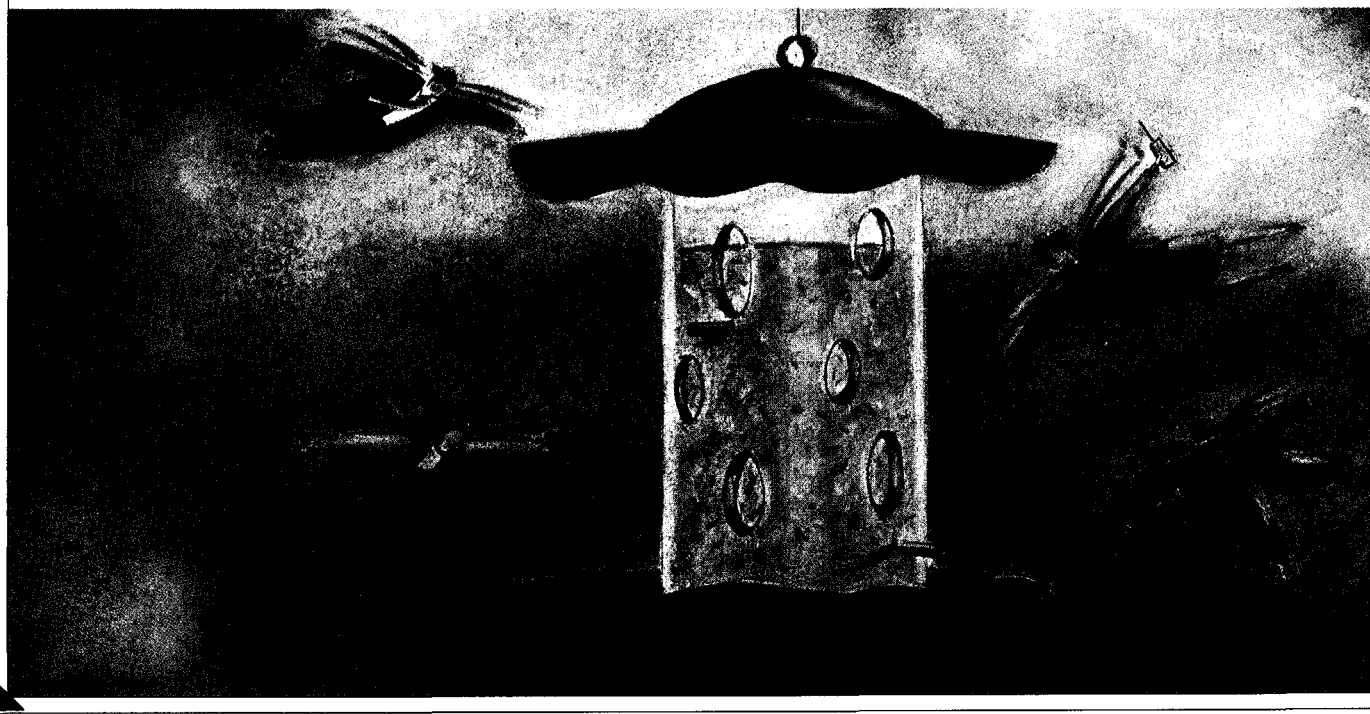
**C**harles Mann calls the present situation "The Prostate-Cancer Dilemma." As the widow of a prostate-cancer victim, I call it a tragedy and a reflection of the dashed hopes that may accompany diagnosis and treatment.

In 1982 my fifty-six-year-old Caucasian husband learned of his prostate-cancer diagnosis after a routine physical. (It had been three years since the previous one.) The probabilities for initial treatment seemed promising with negative CAT and bone scans. We received conflicting views about the efficacy of treatment with radiation or surgery. He opted for radiation.

His younger brother (fifty-two) learned three months later that he, too, had prostate cancer. He chose surgical treatment, and suffered the side effects noted in Mann's article. Two years later his incontinence was successfully treated with a prosthetic implant. He is alive and "free" of malignancy eleven years later.

A year and a half ago, at age forty-eight, my husband's youngest brother learned that he also had prostate cancer. His diagnosis followed an elevated PSA

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level. He chose surgical treatment and is confident about the future.

My husband suffered miserably from the pain accompanying the metastases to almost every bone in his skeleton. During the last three months of his life, bony tumors affected an ocular muscle; he was unable to focus with one eye. They caused paralysis with their pressure on his spinal column. He showed inordinate courage in his three-year battle. He welcomed death from pneumonia as a relief from his suffering.

**Helen F. McGrane**  
Woodland Hills, Calif.

*Charles C. Mann replies:*

I did not cover radiation treatment in my article about prostate cancer because the controversy over its efficacy is similar to the controversy over the value of surgery, and I didn't want to drag readers through yet another confusing issue in what was already a very long article. In retrospect, I agree that this decision was "flawed," as Shari Rudoler puts it. Contrary to her assertion, though, radiation is not a "proven" treatment, because *no*

treatment for prostate cancer has been proved effective. "For patients with early prostate cancer," Dr. Rudoler writes, "survival and relapse rates are the same" with radiation and surgery. True enough; the problem is that the survival rates have not been clearly shown to be greater than those achieved by doing nothing. According to a study published last month in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, just 13 percent of low-grade tumors kill their hosts within ten years—about the same results achieved in the studies of radiation and surgery referred to by Dr. Rudoler. Helen McGrane's heartbreaking letter illustrates the difficulties. Should her husband's death be counted as a failure of radiation? Should her brothers-in-law's better outcomes be regarded as successes for surgery? It is impossible to say. (As Ms. McGrane's story implies, men in families with histories of early prostate cancer seem to face greater risk.) The doctors' situation is beautifully depicted by Gary Berger. Patients want them to do something, but the consequences of treatment are not well known. Shouting in the media about the PSA test,

prostate drugs, and so forth may feed the panic, as he suggests. On the other hand, an earlier diagnosis might have been beneficial to Ms. McGrane's husband. Again, it is hard to know where to turn.

Finally, I would like to note that when I wrote that Dr. Norman Yang was "one of the researchers" involved in the development of the PSA test, I did not mean to imply that his name was on the patent—a matter, it turns out, of legal contention.

**Editors' Note:**

The article "Odds and Ends," in the February, 1993, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, made reference to a number of unusual English words. It should have been noted that some of them were drawn from the book *Poplollies and Bellibones: A Celebration of Lost Words*, by Susan Kelz Sperling, and we regret the omission. Sperling has for several years assisted the magazine with research for the Word Histories column, which appears bimonthly. Interested readers may wish to consult her most recent book, *Lost Words of Love*, which was published last year by Clarkson N. Potter.

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# THE FEBRUARY ALMANAC



## Food

February 21–23, in Toluca, Mexico, potato breeders and other scientists will gather to coordinate efforts against a new and alarmingly aggressive form of the fungal disease known as potato late blight—the fungus responsible for the Irish potato famine of the 1840s. The current form of the blight is even more virulent than its predecessor; it is believed to have originated in Mexico and to have spread through the sale of infected seeds. It has been found in virtually every potato-producing region of the world. Outbreaks have occurred in the United States in the past few years; among the states that have been especially hard hit are New York, Washington, and Maine. The fungus poses the greatest risk in developing countries that lack the resources to buy and apply fungicides (and that rely heavily on potatoes as a dietary staple): China, one of the world's largest potato producers, is a case in point. In advanced countries it could reverse current trends toward reduced fungicide use.

## Health & Safety

If past trends hold, flu season will peak this month. The current season began unusually early, with an outbreak in Louisiana last summer, and is expected to be especially severe (a typical flu season might result in 20,000 fatalities in the United States). The chief culprit: A/Beijing/32/92, a strain of a virus isolated in China in 1992,



which is particularly devastating among the elderly. More elderly people were vaccinated this year than in previous years: the strain's well-publicized virulence created unusually high demand, and in a happy coincidence, this season Medicare covered the cost of vaccinations for the first time. February 14–15, a panel of the World Health Organization—at least, those members well enough to travel—meets in Geneva to make its recommendations for next year's flu vaccine. Vaccines must be updated annually because influenza viruses are constantly mutating. Researchers will be considering such factors as this year's predominant strains, any new strains, and the gaps in antibody response in people who were vaccinated this season.

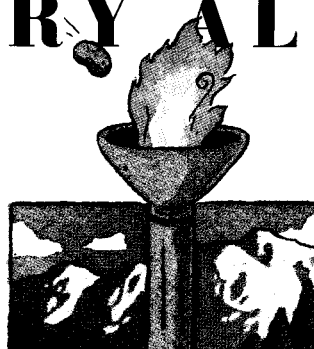


## The Skies

February 1, for the next several evenings the Pleiades, or Seven Sisters, will be almost directly overhead at about 7:00 P.M. To the unaided eye the Pleiades appear as a small, faint cluster of six or seven stars; an observer using binoculars, however, will see many more than seven stars. 25, Full Moon, also known this month as the Wolf, Trapper's, or Frightened Coyote Moon.

## Environment

February 12, what is being hailed as the first eco-friendly Winter Olympics begins today in Lillehammer, Norway. In order to avoid the environmental damage wreaked by the shortsighted construction and unchecked waste of past Olympics, Norwegian activists have launched an unprecedented array of recycling, energy-conservation, and public-education programs. Fines of up



to \$10,000 per tree were imposed for unnecessary logging during the construction of the bobsled track. Large nets have been installed throughout the biathlon course to catch bullets. And this year's Olympic torch might be fueled by bio-ethanol, a renewable energy source supplied by local potato farmers. Some environmentalists fear that the hyping of the "Green Games" may divert criticism from Norway's government-sanctioned whale hunting, which violates an international moratorium in effect since 1986. Norwegian whalers may suspend their activities while the games are in progress.

## Government

February 5, an exemption from the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act for employers with union contracts in effect ends today. The act requires that employers allow 12 weeks of unpaid leave per year for the birth or adoption of a child, to recover from a serious illness, or to care for a seriously ill family member. 11, in the first of just two 30-year bond auctions to be held this year, the federal government will auction off about \$9 billion worth of Treasury bonds. The Clinton Administration last May cut the number of such auctions from four to two, as part of its program to reduce the federal debt. Limiting the sale of long-term bonds prods investors toward shorter-term Treasuries, which have lower yields and thus result in the government's having to pay less interest.



## Arts & Letters

February 3, the official opening of a new reference center in the Norman Rockwell Museum, in Stockbridge, Massachusetts—the first event in a yearlong celebration of the artist's birth a hundred years ago today. The center will house photographs, correspondence, and other archival materials. The year's events will include symposia exploring Rockwell's impact on American culture and an exhibit of 60 paintings rarely seen and never before displayed together. The artist's son Peter, an internationally known sculptor, will create a commemorative piece during a four-month stint as the museum's artist-in-residence later in the year.



## 75 Years Ago

William Beebe, writing in the February, 1919, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: "Surely no one can deny that there is a great gulf between pancakes and truffles. An eternal, fixed, abysmal cañon. It is like the chasm between beds and hammocks. It is not to be denied and not to be traversed; for if pancakes with syrup are a necessary of life, then truffles with anything must be, by the very nature of things, a supreme and undisputed luxury, a regal food for royalty and the chosen of the earth. There cannot be a shadow of a doubt that these two are divided; and it is not alone a mere arbitrary division of poverty and riches as it would appear on the surface. It is an alienation brought about by profound and fundamental differences; for the gulf between them is that gulf which separates the prosaic, the ordinary, the commonplace, from all that is colored and enlivened by romance."



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# The Shock-Art Fallacy

*Modernism shocked early-twentieth-century audiences. Performance artists and "gangsta" rappers shock contemporary audiences. Since both cause shock, both are art. Many of us unconsciously board this train of thought. What's wrong with it?*

**I**N a trendy nightclub a controversial playwright puts on one-man shows in which he excoriates the government, spews profanity, urinates, masturbates, even goes into convulsions. To one onlooker, such performances represent "inconceivable freedom," the "fearful cynical spectacle" of an artist "struggling to eliminate both himself and the last remains of a once firmly established civilization."

by Martha Bayles

Outside a venerable cathedral a crowd of worshippers are startled by a flurry of leaflets calling for a radical rejection of architectural tradition. Looking up, they see a black-clad figure in the campanile, one of several artists vowing to "go out into the street, launch assaults . . . and introduce the fisticuff into the artistic battle." When such stunts dominate the headlines, the artists rejoice.

A collector visits a gallery and buys a work called *Artist's Shit*, a can of feces weighing thirty grams and priced at the current cost of gold. This collector is not alone; the art world is so enamored of the concept that the lucky artist sells ninety cans.

Inside an art gallery an artist invites spectators to "abuse her at their will for six hours." After three hours they have torn away her clothes with razors and begun slashing at her bare skin. When someone holds a loaded gun to her head, a fight breaks out and the proceedings are brought to "an unnerving halt."

No, these vignettes are not culled from Senator Jesse Helms's National Endowment for the Arts blacklist. Rather, they come from the history of modernism: first, the expressionist Frank Wedekind, presiding at Munich's Cafe Simplicissimus at the turn

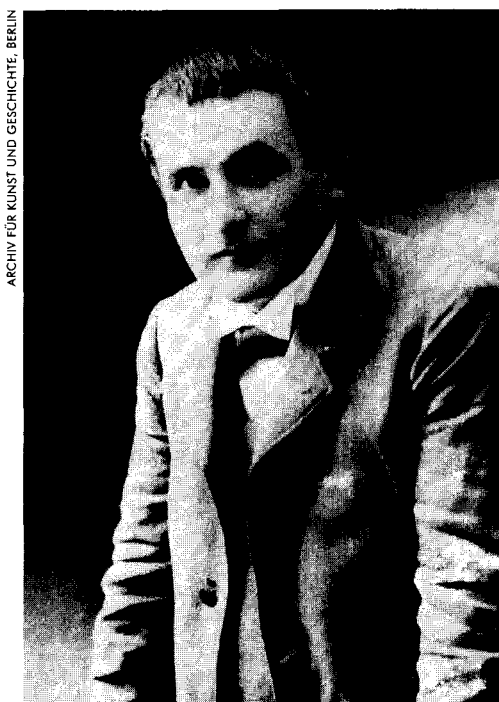
of the century; second, a follower of the futurist Filippo Marinetti, at St. Mark's Cathedral, calling for the total transformation of Venice in 1910; third, the Fluxus artist Piero Manzoni, hawking Dada doo-doo in 1961; and fourth, the performance artist Marina Abramovic, unnerving Naples in 1974.

When we delve into the history of the European avant-garde, we see how thoroughly today's "cutting edge" art recycles the clichés of expressionism, futurism, Dada, surrealism, the Theatre of Cruelty, Fluxus, and "happenings." A certain type of modernist has always sought to jettison the past, to mock aesthetic standards, to provoke the audience, to erase the line between art and life, and to exploit the shock potential of the mass media.

Should we resign ourselves, taking comfort in the soothing words of *Time*'s Richard Corliss: "That has always been the

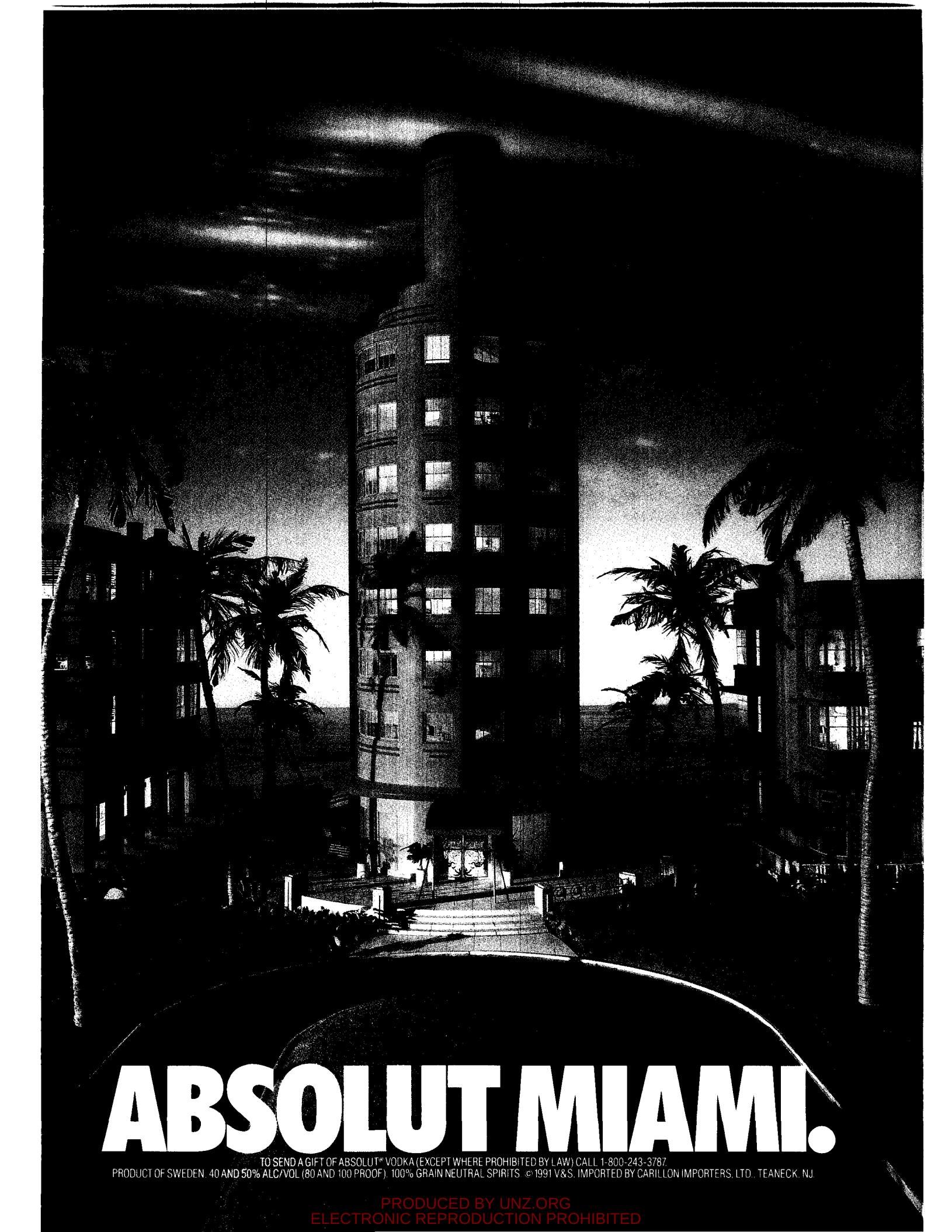
role of art: to shock, not just to ratify the prejudices of the generation in power"?

I think not. First, modernism cannot be reduced to Corliss's crude alternatives. At the turn of the century, when Wedekind was wetting his pants, Paul Cézanne was immortalizing Mont St. Victoire. In 1910, when Marinetti was scattering leaflets, Igor Stravinsky was composing *The Firebird*. In 1961, when Manzoni was labeling cans, Walker Percy was exploring cinematic fiction in *The Moviegoer*. And in 1974, when Abramovic was handing out razors, Ingmar Bergman was expanding film narrative in *Scenes From a Marriage*. The best modernist art seeks neither "to shock" nor "to ratify the prejudices of the generation in power" but to humanize the modern world.



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FRANK WEDEKIND IN THE 1890s



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Still, the Corliss view is widespread. After a century of modernism most of us tend to assume automatically that if art is controversial, our hidebound society, with its hostility to new ideas, sensibilities, and artistic practices, is to blame. Thus we draw an implicit parallel between the original bourgeois reaction to modernism and the outrage provoked by people like the performance artist Karen Finley and the "gangsta" rapper Ice-T. Recalling that bourgeois critics abused Manet for painting in a non-Academic style, bourgeois authorities censored Flaubert for depicting adultery, and bourgeois theatergoers jeered Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, those who subscribe to the Corliss fallacy assume that Finley's chocolate-smears breasts and Ice-T's "evil dick" must be art because they, too, "shock the bourgeoisie."

But what is the nature of the shock? Is today's shock art introducing forbidden ideas into a repressive polity? Is it creatively defying the rigid conventions of an Academy? Is it breaking a puritanical silence about sex? Is it challenging the stilted decorum of a ruling class? Granted, there are some cultural bomb throwers who seem to think we are living in Bismarck's Germany, just as there are some Bible thumpers who seem to think that all modern art is the work of the devil. But these voices, though loud, are few. Most of us accept, however dubiously, the right of artists to do anything they want.

But this doesn't mean we can't be shocked. One thing remains shocking: obscenity. The Supreme Court has defined obscenity as the depiction of "sexual conduct" in a "patently offensive way" lacking "serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value." This definition evolved out of a century-long legal battle over the portrayal of sex in serious literature, and it represents the victory of art over prudery. Yet precisely because this legal definition focuses exclusively on sex while exempting material possessing "serious artistic value," it is irrelevant to our present situation.

A better definition of obscenity comes from the legal scholar Harry M. Clor. Clor argues that obscenity resides not in particular bodily functions or conditions but in the angle of vision taken toward them:

Obscenity . . . consists in a degradation of the human dimensions of life to a sub-human or merely physical level. . . . Thus, there can be an obscene view of sex; there can also be obscene views of death, of birth, of illness, and of acts such as that of eating or defecating. Obscenity makes a public exhibition of these phenomena and does so in such a way that their larger human context is lost or depreciated.

Obscenity is shocking because it violates our sense of shame. In puritanical cultures the slightest reference to the body causes undue shame. But that does not mean we should never feel shame. Shame is the natural, universal response to nakedness, eroticism, and suffering. In most human societies these states

are taboo—meaning not forbidden but sacred and awe-inspiring, connected with the mysterious beginnings and endings of life. It is only in the modern West that people have sought to eradicate these taboos.

Or to exploit them. Today's shock artists equate shame with repression because they are committed to obscenity as the only reliable means of getting a shocked reaction out of the public. They flatter themselves that this reaction is akin to that in the great scandals of the modernist past. But in fact it comes neither from public resistance to aesthetic innovation nor from a high degree of prudery in the culture. Instead it reflects the simple fact that most people are not exhibitionists or voyeurs. Most people feel slight embarrassment and a strong need for either ritual or privacy when eating, eliminating, making love, suffering, and dying. If that makes them unable to appreciate "art," then the word has lost its meaning.

Obscenity as art is everywhere. In the Whitney Museum one finds a photographic display of penises in one room and a row of video monitors showing "transgressive" sexual practices in another. In *Spin* magazine one finds a jeans advertisement in which a young man brandishes a handgun over the caption "Teaching kids to KILL helps them deal directly with reality." The compulsion to shock dominates popular music, movies, television, publishing, talk radio, stand-up comedy, and video games. Never before in the history of culture has obscenity been so pervasive.

Yet as obscenity ceases to be the preoccupation of a self-conscious elite and enters the popular culture, it will face something it has never had to face before: a plebiscite. One may hesitate to place too much faith in the aesthetic judgment of the everyday people who will cast the deciding votes. But better they than the shock artists, with their fond belief that if something is shockingly degrading and dehumanizing, it is, perforce, art. At least the mainstream is likely to weigh the claims of art against those of civility, decency, and morality.

The danger is that such popular revulsion can lead to backlash, censorship, even repression. Raising the specter of the Nazi crackdown on "degenerate art," shock artists warn that the same thing is happening today, because the NEA is under fire from conservatives. Yet all this stale posturing proves is that some artists are so isolated from the rest of the world that their ideas never undergo a reality check. In one breath they vow to disrupt the (presumably) repressive social order. In the next they complain that the power behind that order—the government—won't pay their bills. As George Orwell observed, there are some ideas so preposterous that only an intellectual could believe them. Today we can add, "Or an NEA grantee." ☸

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shock art introducing  
forbidden ideas into a re-  
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silence about sex?*





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## A Climate for Demagogues

*Unification has proved a mixed blessing for long-prosperous Germany. Unless progressive leadership can be found, neo-Nazis may fill the void*

**M**OST people can only dream of a life as good as Hartmut Deckert's. He lives in one of those perfect villages for which Germany is famous, where the streets are litter-free and a schedule posted at the bus stop tells exactly when the next bus will arrive. Deckert's salary at the Porsche factory in nearby Stuttgart, where

**by Stephen Kinzer**

he has worked for seventeen years, amounts to nearly \$50,000 a year. He works thirty-six hours a week and enjoys thirty days of vacation, plus occasional paid furloughs that sometimes stretch beyond a week. His hobbies include cultivating exotic flowers and caring for his car, a sleek red Porsche.

But like everyone he works with—and,

indeed, like almost everyone in Germany—Deckert is falling into a disorienting pessimism. He knows that the fat years, the years of booming growth and ever-higher living standards, are over, perhaps forever. Jobs are disappearing, social benefits are being reduced, and the country's stability is being challenged by a wave of neo-Nazism. With a suddenness that no one anticipated, Germany's self-confidence has been shaken.

Sitting in a shady corner of his sprawling garden, Deckert told me he knows what caused this atmosphere of crisis. "We got spoiled—it's that simple," he said. "As long as I've been alive, every year has been better than the one before. We thought it would go on forever. Nothing prepared us for what's happening now. We've never lived through something like this. It's a tremendous shock, and it's dangerous. For the first time in my life I'm really worried about the future—not just my future but Germany's future."

Business is very bad at Porsche. Sales of the speedy luxury cars on which the

*Workers in Bischofferode, Germany, protest the closing of a mine*

company built its reputation have fallen by more than half in the space of just two years. The work force has been cut by 25 percent. Inside the plant, workers are nervous and insecure.

Porsche's troubles reflect those of other German auto companies. As recently as mid-1991 the auto industry employed nearly 800,000 people; 100,000 of those jobs are now gone, and executives say another 100,000 must go. The cuts are painful not only to companies like Porsche, Mercedes-Benz, and BMW but also to the scores of smaller firms that supply them with parts. Nearly all these firms have imposed hiring freezes and begun pushing workers into early retirement or buying out their contracts.

*In a memorable phrase  
Kohl predicted that  
eastern Germany  
would soon be transformed into a "blooming landscape" of  
prosperity and social  
justice.*

If the crisis were limited to the auto industry, Germans would not be as worried as they are today. But heavy industries like coal mining and steel production, which fueled Germany's long "economic miracle," are also staggering. High-tech manufacturers of optical equipment, machine tools, and precision equipment, companies that have made German technology legendary throughout the world, are being overtaken by upstart challengers from countries with far lower labor and production costs. And in the eastern states more than half the industrial jobs that existed five years ago are gone. No one expects them to be replaced in the near future.

"When I went to the bank for a loan to buy this house, all I had to say was that I worked at Porsche," Deckert recalled wistfully as he gazed out at his orchids.

"They gave me the money right away, because they assumed I had a job for life. I thought so myself. I believed it right up until last year. No one expected something like this to happen.

"The scariest part is the political effect that's going to come from all this. It definitely means a turn to the right. That always happens in Germany when times get bad. People start to panic, and they look for easy answers. It's a great climate for demagogues."

Because of his seniority Deckert is unlikely to lose his job anytime soon. But his wife, Hannelore, who for years worked as a bookkeeper for a data-processing company in Stuttgart, was suddenly laid off last May. The company's managers announced one day that because of reduced demand they had decided to cut their work force by 10 percent. Every employee over the age of forty was fired.

"Always better, always better, always better—that's the way we've been used to living," she said with a shrug. "It used to be that when a new housing complex was built around here, it was sold out before the construction was even finished. Now people are defaulting on their payments. This was never supposed to happen. It's made people angry and confused. I hate to think where it's all leading."

**T**HE economic roots of Germany's crisis are not hard to identify. The costs of doing business here are among the highest in the world; the average auto worker in Germany, for example, costs his or her employer nearly \$30 an hour, as compared with \$21 in Japan and even less in Mexico or South Korea. Corporate managers, lulled into complacency by the country's long boom, dozed while their foreign competitors were working feverishly to develop new products and find new markets. Perhaps most important, political leaders failed dismally to prepare the country for the very new challenges of the post-Cold War era.

The shock and pain that Germans are now feeling cannot be understood without realizing how well West Germans have lived for the past few decades. The work week is short and getting shorter. Most workers are given an extra month's pay at Christmas and a bonus to help them pay for their vacations. Construction laborers

are paid two thirds of a day's salary if bad weather prevents them from working. Almost everyone has access to excellent health care and education. Germany has few slums, and a comprehensive web of social programs has all but eliminated poverty. Roads, bridges, and rail lines are kept in top shape. Practically every town has a public swimming complex or sports hall. Foreign travel is a normal part of life for almost everyone. The good times, in short, have been very good.

East Germany's sudden collapse and the national unification that followed in 1990 need not have brought down this magnificent social and economic edifice. The shortsightedness and irresponsibility with which government leaders managed the unification process, however, laid the basis for today's crisis.

The year of German unification was also an election year. Chancellor Helmut Kohl, eager to win votes in the East, announced that he would allow people there to exchange huge amounts of their virtually worthless ostmarks for deutschmarks, at a ratio of one to one. That decision, a classic triumph of politics over economic reality, cost the government more than \$100 billion, nearly all of which was added to the rapidly growing national debt.

During his campaign Kohl repeated the same rosy predictions every time he addressed an audience in the East. After unification, he promised, "*es wird keinem schlechter gehen und vielen besser*"—"no one will be worse off, and many will do better." In another memorable phrase he predicted that eastern Germany would soon be transformed into a "blooming landscape" of prosperity and social justice.

Hartmut Deckert, who was at that time an active member of the opposition Social Democratic Party (he has since quit politics in frustration), volunteered to spend a few days helping the party's campaign in the East. He was sent to the town of Meissen, famous for its centuries-old porcelain works.

"People there were so naive," he told me, shaking his head in pity. "They had no experience with election speeches. They believed every word Kohl said. The idea that people might lose their jobs never occurred to them.

"I went back to the East for a visit last  
(Continued on page 30)

# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



A SPECIAL ISSUE  
CHRISTMAS

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# Classical Music

BY AUSTIN BAER

## THE MET MEETS THE MODERN

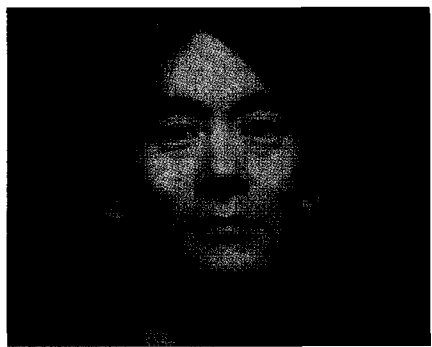
Despite recent box-office smashes with the world premieres of John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* (its excitement is captured on the Deutsche Grammophon video) and Philip Glass's *The Voyage*, the Metropolitan Opera is by no means out to shed its image as a temple to the 18th and 19th centuries. Yet this month the house devotes itself conspicuously to what we might best call Modern Classics (and if the connotations seem literary, so be it).

With the Met's presentation of *Death in Venice*, based on Thomas Mann's novella, Benjamin Britten receives for the first time the honor of a second new production (premiere February 7, with a live broadcast over the Texaco network on February 26). Some may fault the choice as eccentric: the original production, nine years ago, has not outworn its welcome, and there is much of the fascinating Britten canon the Met has yet to explore. Of course, Venice's domes, palaces, bridges, canals, and Lido, how-



Death in Venice

silences the martyrs' song one voice at a time. The Met, having assembled many strong casts for Poulenc in the past (including Jessye Norman, Frederica von Stade, and Maria Ewing), does so again: the stars this time are Dawn Upshaw, Teresa Stratas, Helga Dernesh, and Florence Quivar. Moreover, the opera marks the Met debut of Kent Nagano, a conductor whose keen yet flexible sense of pace, texture, and line we have been missing of late here in his native country. He has been busy abroad, particularly with the Opéra de Lyon, where he has made some splendid recordings of under- or unrecorded operas of this century, among them Prokofiev's *Love of Three Oranges*, Busoni's *Turandot* and *Arlecchino*, and *Carmelites* itself (all on the Virgin label). For other dates and tickets, call 212-362-6000.



Conductor Kent Nagano

ering on the mirror of the lagoon, must be as ensnaring to set designers today as they have been to generations of painters, from Bellotto to Turner and beyond. And perhaps increased familiarity with *Death* (coupled with the novelty of a new staging) can smooth the way for other resurrections.

Two weeks after the Britten premiere Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, from the play by Georges Bernanos, returns in a gripping staging by John Dexter (premiere February 21, broadcast March 12). The subject does not sound promising: during the French Revolution nuns cling to faith and die on the guillotine. But the opera builds with great power to a staggering finale, in which the chop of the blade

## BIRDSONG IN CONCERT

Olivier Messiaen, who went home to God not quite two years ago, was as much a mystic as a musician. His compositions do not move so much as hover. Where other composers write movements, he writes rooms. In a century full of musical strangeness, perhaps nothing is stranger than the notion of Messiaen, master theorist of harmony, standing in the African or Australian outback notating the songs of birds. This, to him, was music from before the Fall, and from it he liked to weave his own strangely timeless, strangely static, yet gloriously bejeweled strains. This month *Oiseaux exotiques* (*Exotic Birds*),



Seiji Ozawa

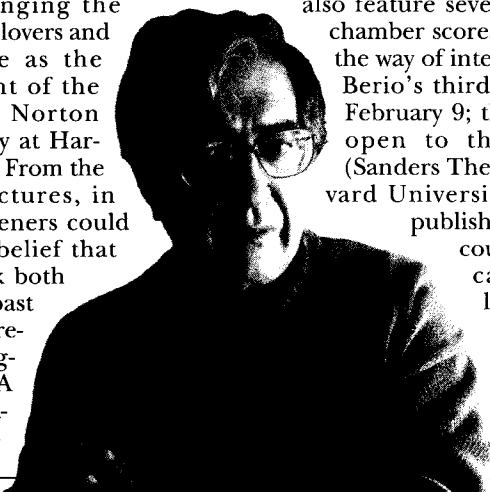
one of his loveliest, most immediately bewitching tapestries, comes to the Boston Symphony, under the baton of Seiji Ozawa. Mitsuko Uchida, whose fastidious, often seraphic pianism seems made to order for the Messiaenic strain, takes the intricate solo part February 11, 15, and 19 (617-266-1200).

## THE MIND BEHIND THE MUSIC

In the libretto for the opera *Unre in ascolto* (*A King Listens*), inspired by *The Tempest*, Italo Calvino has the protagonist leave the stage meditating on "a recollection of the future." This Hawkingsque notion is much on the mind of the opera's composer, Luciano Berio, who these days is challenging the minds of music lovers and linguists alike as the latest occupant of the Charles Eliot Norton Chair of Poetry at Harvard University. From the first of his lectures, in November, listeners could glean Berio's belief that every new work both redefines the past and implies a previously unimagined future. A glorious illustration is *Render-*

ing, his performing edition of Schubert's incomplete Tenth Symphony, pieced together with Berio's own "gray music," which he has likened to mortar between architectural fragments. Berio leads *Rendering* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra on March 10, 11, 12, and 15 (617-266-1200). The lectures also feature several of the speaker's chamber scores plus much more in the way of intellectual provocation. Berio's third talk (of five) is on February 9; the series is free and open to the general public (Sanders Theatre, 4:30 P.M.). Harvard University Press intends to publish the lectures in due course, but such publications are often a long time coming. Best to catch Berio's thought on the wing.

Austin Baer is a New York-based writer.



# Dance and Theater

BY AUSTIN BAER AND LAURA JACOBS

## FREE FROM SHAKESPEARE? OR FREE OF?

The title of Carlyle Brown's *The African Company Presents Richard the Third* tells you exactly what to expect, though naturally you will want to know more. The time is "circa 1821"; the place is New York City, where a



"The African Company"

troupe of black menials-by-day has the hubris to play Shakespeare—and the bad luck to attract the notice of the management of the illustrious Park Theatre, where the British star Junius Brutus Booth is making his American debut in the very same play. The suppression of the black company is a forgone conclusion, but not the sequel: forbidden Shakespeare, the black

impresario pens his own inflammatory, highly topical *Drama of King Shotaway*. In outline all this is true to life. What does it mean? Are blacks empowered by playing Shakespeare's kings and queens? Are they disenfranchised when Shakespeare is taken from them, or are they rather set free? The Illinois Theatre Center, in Park Forest, invites its audiences to confront Brown's hard questions in the context of Black History Month (February 11–27; 708-481-3510). Meanwhile, the New York-based Acting Company (212-564-3510) brings the play to audiences all over the land. Catch it if you can. —A.B.

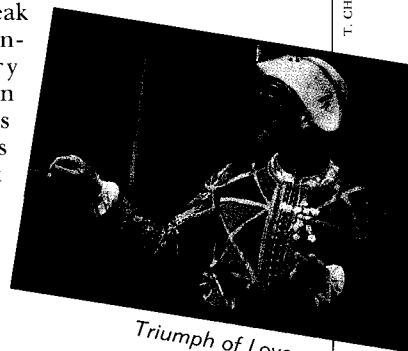
## THE GRAHAM COMPANY'S UNEXPECTED GUEST

The late Martha Graham would have been 100 this year, and the company bearing her name has marked the season with a most happy treason: Twyla Tharp, that dance magpie with a taste for tinfoil and twine, has been allowed into the hallowed halls of Graham theater. Tharp's subject is the myth of Demeter and Persephone. Surprisingly set to klezmer music, its performers costumed in gypsy-widow dresses of black velvet and lace, the dance is a

high-speed traveling show of crossed paths and shadow gesture, dramatic geometry and soft-shoe complexity. It's the dancingest work Tharp has made in a long time, and in it the Graham Company (212-832-9166) looks impressively updated and unbound. *Demeter and Persephone* is scheduled for the company's February and March tour, which stops in Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Seattle, and cities in New England and the Southeast. —L.J.

## MARIVAUDAGE À LA MODE

"I warn you, I can't stand it when you look so lovingly at me. Are you doing it on purpose?" The French have a word for such sallies; it is *marivaudage*, taken from the name of the 18th-century playwright Marivaux, whose dialogue consists of nothing but. His plots—involving love-smitten princes and princesses, nobles and commoners, and the nimble servants of the *commedia dell'arte*—pile feint upon feint, stratagem upon stratagem; love true or deluded threads its way through a maze of mirrors. Why these diamond-hard baubles speak to the contemporary American temper is anybody's guess, but apparently they do. February through March



Triumph of Love

*The Triumph of Love* lights up the Berkeley Repertory Theatre (510-845-4700), while the Hartford Stage (203-527-5151) crosses its fingers for *False Admissions*. In March the Studio Arena Theatre, in Buffalo (716-856-5650), hazards *The Game of Love and Chance*, and in May *The Double Inconstancy* will be staged by Princeton's McCarter Theatre (609-683-8000). What's going on here? The French have a word for it. This playwright is *en vogue*. —A.B.

## TAYLOR'S 100TH WORK: A SWEET-TEMPERED SPINDRIFT

Where painters might hang their 100th work with a platinum plaque, choreographer Paul Taylor has called his 100th dance, premiered this season, *Spindrift*. The title is a term for sea spray, and the dance has the out-of-time look we associate with beach settings—so like Taylor to go ineffable when we expect ceremony. And yet, sweet-tempered *Spindrift* has the look of a master's canvas: persimmon lights brush dark hues of soil and sky. The noble Andrew Asnes is a young god given to Faustian feeling, a hero who continually crumples to the ground as friends and lovers dance by. *Spindrift* is one of Taylor's lyric wanderings, a



Paul Taylor Company performing *Spindrift* wind-worn *Winterreise* that reads like a musing on Taylor's own mortality.

The season's other new dance, *A Field of Grass*, is a pot party strung out

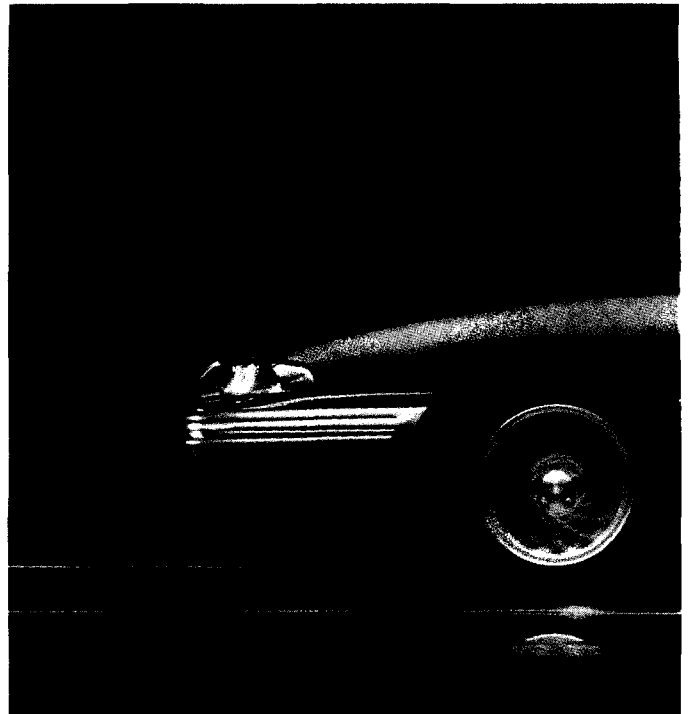
on the songs of Harry Nilsson, purring chronicler of the flower-power era. *Grass* hasn't the gunmetal glitter of the similarly structured *Company B*, but the floating, leaping dances Taylor has fashioned to Nilsson's swinging rhythms accumulate a strangely grave power. A dreamy dance about escapism, *Grass* holds a deep breath of sadness.

These two winners, along with some Taylor classics, will be at the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater (202-467-4600) February 22–27, and in Williamsburg, Virginia, March 1–2. —L.J.

Austin Baer is a New York-based writer. Laura Jacobs is editor in chief of Stagebill.

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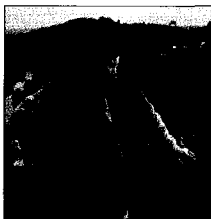
CHRYSLER 

# Film

BY ELLA TAYLOR

## C. S. LEWIS STEPS INTO THE LIGHT

**E**xcruciatingly shy SWM meets warm SWF and finds love despite onset of terminal illness. Sound like a pitch for a dreary TV movie of the week? Not if the SWM is Anthony Hopkins playing C. S. Lewis, the British Christian scholar and author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Traumatized by the premature death of his mother, Lewis was cocooned in fusty middle-aged celibacy when he met the lively Jewish-American writer Joy Gresham. *Shadowlands*, adapted by William Nicholson from his stage play, is the story of how Gresham defrosted Lewis (very slowly) and gave him



Richard Attenborough

a life worth examining. Director Richard Attenborough drops the unctuous hyperbole of his film epics for this elegiac mood piece, which is brightened by the testily affectionate sparring between Hopkins and the adventurous Debra Winger, who disappears beautifully into her role as the forthright divorcee who teaches Lewis the joys and risks of opening himself to another. Nicholson's quietly witty screenplay offers a wonderfully dense evocation of how Lewis came to be the bifurcated man he was: a sophisticated humanist philosopher crossed with a hypersensitive man-boy who fashioned his childhood terrors into tales that had millions of thrilled kids rattling door-knobs to find the exit to Narnia.



Winger and Hopkins

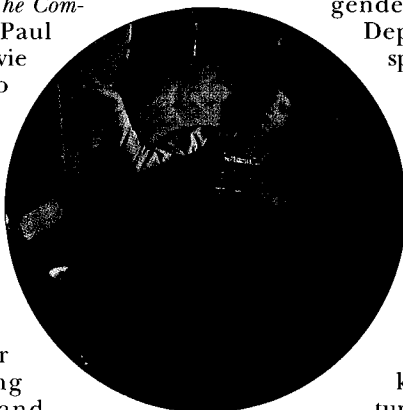
## TENDING McEWAN'S CEMENT GARDEN

**B**ritish novelist Ian McEwan combines the skills of a serious writer with a gothic comedian's flair for domestic horror—which may be why the movie industry is swallowing his books whole. Harold Pinter adapted McEwan's *The Comfort of Strangers* for Paul Schrader's 1992 movie about a couple who have the misfortune to run into Christopher Walken while on holiday in Italy. Miramax plans a spring release of John Schlesinger's film adaptation of McEwan's *The Innocent*, set in Cold War Berlin and starring Anthony Hopkins and Isabella Rossellini.

Now comes *The Cement Garden*, directed by Andrew Birkin from McEwan's acclaimed first novel. Jack (Andrew Robertson) is a spotty, charmless youth with a profound indifference to personal hygiene and an abiding interest in his ungovernable sexuality. When he and his three siblings are orphaned by the untimely deaths of

their parents, family propriety drops away with alarming speed. The four children, with their gentle mother (Sinead Cusack, of *Waterland*) safely encased in concrete belowstairs, set about breaking every domestic and gender taboo in the book.

Depending on your perspective, *The Cement Garden* is either a witty comment on what we really want to do to our nearest and dearest or a thoroughly nasty piece of perversion. But there's a grungy poetry to this film, shot in London's Docklands; and Birkin's direction, by turns bumpily ghoulish and tender, elicits funny



Jack's ennui

and touching performances from children ranging from seven to seventeen years old. Rumor has it that McEwan lives happily with his wife and four lovely children. Amazing how much underground anxiety an orderly life can produce.

*Ella Taylor is a film columnist for Mirabella.*

## LOST IN PARADISE

**I**f ever a film theme has been honored by endless imitation, it is the great French filmmaker Jean Renoir's idea of stranding a bunch of tortured souls in a bucolic paradise and letting them thrash around in a stew of thwarted love and friendship, runaway sex and great cuisine, not necessarily in that order. The Spanish director Fernando Trueba's gorgeous, endearingly silly *Belle Epoque* (Spain's entry for this year's Academy Awards) again offers the sincerest form of flattery to Renoir's *A Day in the Country*. Jorge Sanz, the Adonis to whom Victoria Abril did such stimulating things in Vicente Aranda's steamy *Lovers*, plays Fernando, a young army deserter in



Belle Epoque's Maribel Verdu

1930s Spain who is befriended by an old painter (Fernando Fernán Gómez) as wise as he is nutty. Fernando's beauty and gourmet cooking capture the attention of the painter's four luscious daughters, and their imaginative efforts to ensnare their suggestible guest trigger a sexy farce in which everyone gets a private lesson in liberation and constraint.

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(Continued from page 22)

year, and it was a sad sight. Lots of people say life is much harder for them now. Sure, they have welfare and unemployment money, but they've lost their dignity. People who are fifty years old and have worked all their lives are suddenly told that the new society doesn't need them. The kindergarten places guaranteed to their children, their low rents, their whole sense of community—it's gone forever. A lot of them are very bitter, and I don't blame them."

To pay the staggering costs of unification, which are running at about \$130 billion a year, the government has imposed a variety of new taxes. Westerners paid happily for a while, but no longer.

"I've reached the point where I don't want to pay any more," Deckert said with a shrug. "I'm willing to do my share, but why should workers pay the most? People who make money from capital instead of from labor are getting off easy. The government is wasting money on idiotic projects. Let's share the burden a little more fairly."

To give Chancellor Kohl the benefit of the doubt, he may have genuinely underestimated the cost of rebuilding eastern Germany (although his Social Democratic opponent in 1990, Oskar Lafontaine, warned repeatedly that the process would not be nearly as painless as Kohl was promising). But by a year or so after the unification treaty took effect, in October of 1990, the true situation was clear to all. Kohl might have drawn up a financing package under which all segments of society—workers, employers, white-collar professionals, banks, stock speculators, and governments at every level—were asked to make equivalent sacrifices. But to this day he has not done so. This year's budget, for example, cuts social services by more than \$12 billion but continues funding for hugely expensive projects, including a new fighter jet that even the Defense Minister concedes is unnecessarily extravagant.

Paying its bills has exposed Germany to the danger of inflation, which history-minded Germans fear terribly because of the country's experience during the Weimar years. To prevent that specter from re-emerging, the Bundesbank must keep interest rates high. This policy is undoubtedly good for Germany, but it has angered many other European governments, which accuse the Bundesbank of dragging the entire continent into reces-



MIKE SCHRODER/ARGUS/FOCUS/MATRIX, INSET: WOLFGANG STECHER/VISUM

*A vigil in Solingen where a fire-bombing claimed Turkish lives*

sion. It has put considerable strain on Germany's relations with its neighbors, threatening even the French-German friendship on which European stability depends.

Another source of resentment in nearby capitals is unified Germany's first and so far only major initiative in world affairs—its successful campaign to secure early European recognition for break-away Yugoslav republics. Even many German diplomats now concede that the German approach was disastrously wrong, and that by accepting arbitrarily drawn borders and failing to insist on protection for minorities in the emerging republics, Germany helped spark the Balkan catastrophe. These diplomats insist that their nation's initiative was not the opening gambit in a grand scheme to re-establish Germany's traditional sphere of influence but simply an isolated and ill-considered attempt to placate revanchist domestic lobbies. Not all Europeans are persuaded.

THE treaty of unification between East and West Germany was not the product of negotiations between two equals but a takeover of one system by another. Western negotiators worked from the premise that their society had been a complete success and that East Germany had been a complete failure. They fashioned a treaty under which every remnant of East German life was to be wiped away. In perhaps their biggest

blunder, they established the right of former property owners not simply to compensation for land that had been seized by Communist authorities but to the return of the land. The thousands of resulting legal battles, which in some cities are expected to continue into the next century, have crippled efforts to rebuild the East, and feed a growing sense of resentment there.

Even the principal architect of the unification treaty, Wolfgang Schäuble, who was then West Germany's Interior Minister and who may be Germany's next Chancellor, now says that if he had another chance, he would draft a very different document.

"We could have designed the transition better," Schäuble told a group of reporters in Leipzig recently. "It would definitely have been better to leave some of the East German laws in effect for a transition period, and to introduce the West German legal and bureaucratic system step by step."

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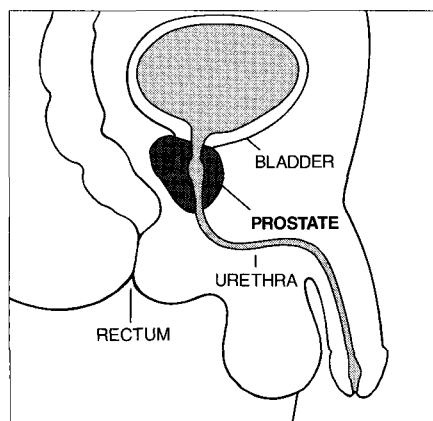
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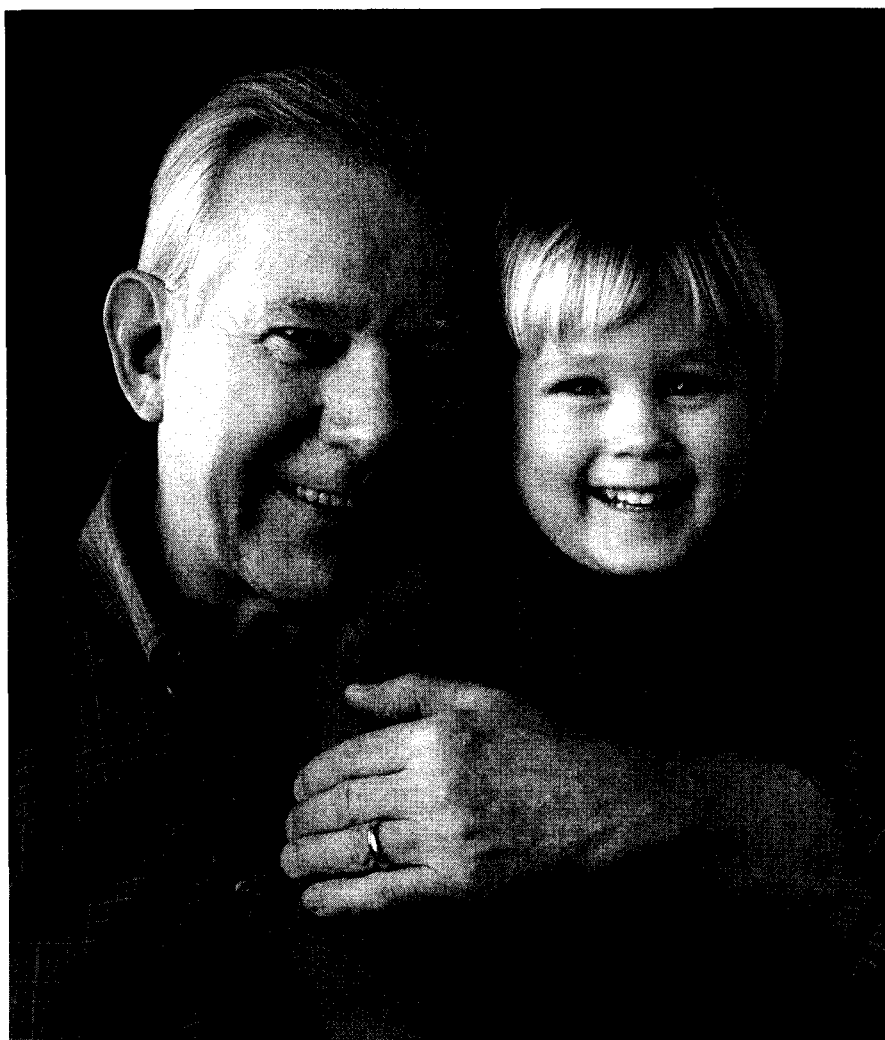
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**PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR® (Prah-s-car)**  
Generic name: finasteride (fin-AS-tur-eyed)

**PROSCAR is for the treatment of symptomatic benign prostatic hyperplasia and for use by men only.**

Your doctor may prescribe PROSCAR if you have a medical condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia or BPH. This occurs only in men.

Please read this information, as well as the leaflet which accompanies your medication, before you start taking PROSCAR. Also, read the leaflet each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss PROSCAR when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups.

**What is BPH?**

BPH is an enlargement of the prostate gland. After age 50, most men develop enlarged prostates. The prostate is located below the bladder. As the prostate enlarges, it may slowly restrict the flow of urine. This can lead to symptoms such as:

- a weak or interrupted urinary stream
- a feeling that you cannot empty your bladder completely
- a feeling of delay or hesitation when you start to urinate
- a need to urinate often, especially at night
- a feeling that you must urinate right away.

**Treatment options for BPH**

There are three main treatment options for BPH:

• **Program of monitoring or "Watchful Waiting".** If a man has an enlarged prostate gland and no symptoms or if his symptoms do not bother him, he and his doctor may decide on a program of monitoring which would include regular checkups, instead of medication or surgery.

• **Medication.** Your doctor may prescribe PROSCAR for BPH. See "What PROSCAR does" below.

• **Surgery.** Some patients may need surgery. Your doctor can describe several different surgical procedures for BPH. Which procedure is best depends on your symptoms and medical condition.

**What PROSCAR does**

PROSCAR lowers levels of a key hormone called DHT (dihydrotestosterone), which is a major cause of prostate growth. Lowering DHT leads to shrinkage of the enlarged prostate gland in most men. This can lead to gradual improvement in urine flow and symptoms over the next several months. However, since each case of BPH is different, you should know that:

- Even though the prostate shrinks, you may NOT see an improvement in urine flow or symptoms.
- You may need to take PROSCAR for six (6) months or more to see whether it helps you.
- Even though you take PROSCAR and it may help you, it is not known whether PROSCAR reduces the need for surgery.

**What you need to know while taking PROSCAR**

• **You must see your doctor regularly.** While taking PROSCAR, you must have regular checkups. Follow your doctor's advice about when to have these checkups.

• **About side effects.** Like all prescription drugs, PROSCAR may cause side effects. Side effects due to PROSCAR may include impotence (or inability to have an erection) and less desire for sex. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 4% of patients in clinical studies. In some cases side effects went away while the patient continued to take PROSCAR.

Some men taking PROSCAR® (Finasteride) may have a decrease in the amount of semen released during sex. This decrease does not appear to interfere with normal sexual function.

You should discuss side effects with your doctor before taking PROSCAR and anytime you think you are having a side effect.

• **Checking for prostate cancer.** Your doctor has prescribed PROSCAR for symptomatic BPH and not for cancer—but a man can have BPH and prostate cancer at the same time. Doctors usually recommend that men be checked for prostate cancer once a year when they turn 50 (or 40 if a family member has had prostate cancer). These checks should continue while you take PROSCAR. PROSCAR is not a treatment for prostate cancer.

• **About prostate specific antigen (PSA).** Your doctor may have done a blood test called PSA. PROSCAR can alter PSA values. For more information, talk to your doctor.

• **A warning about PROSCAR and pregnancy.**

PROSCAR is for use by MEN only.

PROSCAR is generally well tolerated in men. However, women who are pregnant, or women who could become pregnant, should avoid the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

If the active ingredient is absorbed by a woman who is pregnant with a male baby, it may cause the male baby to be born with abnormalities of the sex organs. Therefore, any woman who is pregnant or who could become pregnant must not come into direct contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

Two of the ways in which a woman might absorb the active ingredient in PROSCAR are:

**Sexual contact.** Your semen may contain a small amount of the active ingredient of the drug. If your partner is pregnant, or if you and your partner decide to have a baby, you must stop taking PROSCAR and talk to your doctor. If your partner could become pregnant, proper use of a condom can reduce the risk of exposing her to your semen (discuss this further with your doctor).

**Handling broken tablets.** Women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant must **not handle broken** tablets of PROSCAR.

PROSCAR tablets are coated to prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling. If this coating is broken, the tablets should not be handled by women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant.

If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR, a doctor should be consulted. Remember, these warnings apply only if the woman exposed to PROSCAR is pregnant or could become pregnant.

**How to take PROSCAR**

Follow your doctor's advice about how to take PROSCAR. You must take it every day. You may take it with or between meals. To avoid forgetting to take PROSCAR, it may be helpful to take it the same time every day.

Do not share PROSCAR with anyone else; it was prescribed only for you.

Keep PROSCAR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR AND BPH, TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR. IN ADDITION, TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.**



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For his deft handling of the international negotiations leading to unification, Chancellor Kohl was hailed around the world as a wise and crafty statesman. Some of his admirers even began comparing him to Bismarck and Konrad Adenauer. But as soon as the unification treaty was signed, Kohl seemed to sink into a paralysis that has left the country adrift at a time when it needs strong and inspirational leadership.

The Chancellor's failure to meet this historic challenge is matched by his timidity in the face of spreading neo-Nazi violence. In stark contrast to President Richard von Weizsäcker, whose job is supposed to be purely ceremonial but who has become the country's de facto moral leader, Kohl has steadfastly refused to visit the survivors of fire-bomb attacks or street assaults. As if by rote, he repeats the same maddening line after every murder: "*Deutschland ist ein ausländerfreundliches Land und wird so bleiben*"—"Germany is friendly to foreigners and will remain so."

Associates say that Kohl's low-key response to rightist terror is part of a carefully calculated political strategy. He is acutely aware of the growing potential of far-right political parties, they say, and he wants to make sure that conservative voters do not abandon his Christian Democratic Union in favor of those parties. To hold these voters he is taking a strong law-and-order stance and refusing to identify himself with unpopular groups such as Turks and gypsies, who are the terrorists' chief victims.

This strategy, however, blurs the difference between the democratic center and the racist right and has failed to end political violence. The police recorded 1,699 violent crimes by rightists in the first eleven months of 1993, a decline of 28 percent from the comparable figure a year earlier. This marked the first drop in a rate that had been increasing almost monthly since 1991, but although the police took some encouragement, the figures still mean that on a normal day in Germany five rightist assaults take place.

According to police estimates, more than 60,000 Germans are members of far-right groups, including the Republican Party, which holds seats in several state legislatures and threatens to enter the federal parliament this year. Among the far-rightists, too, are said to be 6,200 who are



part of the "militant neo-Nazi scene," most from eastern Germany. Many are not true believers in Nazi ideology, and few know much about the Nazi dictatorship. A good many were members of East Germany's Communist youth organization in the years before 1990. They have seen their parents lose jobs held for decades, and they can't find work themselves. They believe, not without justification, that no one in faraway Bonn knows or cares about their troubles. No charismatic führer has yet emerged to lead them, but if one does, they could pose a profound threat to the political order.

Kurt Kasch, a senior vice-president of Deutsche Bank, the country's largest, is among many thoughtful Germans who are alarmed at these trends. From his corner office atop the bank's modern regional headquarters in Berlin, he can see for miles in every direction, and he doesn't like what he sees.

"Germany is at a fork in the road," Kasch asserted recently over a private lunch in his office. "We have the ability to change, and even to change without much pain. But the question is whether we are willing to do it. All we need to do is work and save a little more, and consume and spend a little less. It isn't just a problem of the unions. In fact the unions, despite their public rhetoric, have become much more aware of the necessity to cope with these issues than the government. Political leadership has failed at every level.

"The Christian Democrats are tired and the Social Democrats are weak. Many say they will join in a 'grand coalition' after the election this year. That would be a marriage of the lame and the blind. It would be a government in constant internal strife, and would only increase this feeling of alienation that is spreading across Germany.

"I don't think right-wing parties will be a real threat this year, but if the mood in Germany keeps developing as it is, they'll be a major factor by the time of the 1998 election. I'm afraid they are going to begin attracting more sophisticated people

to their ranks, people from academia who are well traveled, well dressed, fluent in English, and good political debaters. A lot of people are saying, 'I don't like these kids marching through the streets with their Hitler salutes, but in some ways they're right.' Liberal newspapers may joke about these parties, but they are gaining a great deal of sympathy. In my worst-case sce-

litical but eminently moral. He never imagined that the communist system would one day collapse, and fully expected to live his whole life as a nonentity in East Germany.

After the Berlin Wall was breached, on the night of November 9, 1989, Thierse's prospects suddenly brightened. He might now, he realized, begin living a more active life, contributing to society in a way that previously had been impossible. He



GÖTZ LINZENMEIER/VISUM

*In Nesselwang two generations of Nazis and, inset, some opponents*

nario they get twenty to twenty-five percent of the vote in 1998. It's not enough to form a government but enough to have real influence."

**O**NLY a few miles from Kasch's office lies the rundown eastern neighborhood of Prenzlauer Berg. Many of its residents are unemployed or on welfare, and most of its buildings are old and crumbling. In one of them, opposite the stone nineteenth-century water tower that is one of the neighborhood's landmarks, Wolfgang Thierse, the local representative in Parliament, maintains a small office.

Thierse is one of the most intriguing figures to emerge from eastern Germany in recent years. He might have had a successful career as a Communist apparatchik, but he refused to join the Party or to make the other compromises that were necessary for such success. Instead he found what he calls "an obscure niche" researching Germany's literary history, and began a life that was not actively po-

joined the Social Democratic Party, won election to Parliament, and, despite his unkempt red beard and his distaste for neckties, shot to political stardom. His voice is a kind of conscience of the East, and his views command attention and respect. He rejected a chance to become the Social Democratic candidate for mayor of Berlin, because the offer did not guarantee him enough independence, but he has been elected one of the party's deputy leaders. No easterner in Bonn is more admired.

"This country was unified on the basis of a double lie," Thierse asserted as the sun flooded into his office one recent morning. "Easterners were told that their region was going to become a blooming landscape, and westerners were told that they wouldn't have to pay. When both of those promises turned out to be false, the trouble began.

"During the forty years of growth in West Germany, money was always plentiful enough to prevent any serious social

conflicts from emerging. Suddenly people in the West are realizing that those days are gone. They are in a psychological crisis, and that has made the situation in this country very tense. The racist attacks are only the most public sign of some very deep fears that are coming to the surface. We are facing social and political conflicts that Germany has not known for forty or fifty years.

"This great uncertainty that has spread over our country extends beyond our borders, into the debate about Germany's role in the world. We are a new country, and we have to define ourselves. What is our national interest? Until 1989 the answer was clear, one answer for the West and another for the East. But now we

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have to come up with a new answer, and because of our background and history that is a very difficult challenge. It's natural that other countries worry about this process. They're afraid we will succumb to old compulsions and impulses, which would be very dangerous for Europe."

Unlike the Japanese, who have spent the postwar years assiduously ignoring the truth about the horrors they perpetrated on their neighbors, Germans have for the most part squarely faced the reality of Nazism. Schoolchildren visit concentration camps, President von Weizsäcker and other political leaders regularly warn people never to forget their nation's evil past, and hardly a week goes by when a film or documentary about Nazi brutality isn't shown on television. Partly as a result of this long campaign, many millions of centrist, middle-class Germans have

become dedicated pacifists. They believe that war can never resolve international conflicts and that German soldiers should never again be sent to fight abroad.

This impulse has helped to paralyze German foreign policy. The decision to send a few hundred German soldiers to a peaceful region of Somalia far from Mogadishu sparked bitter debate in Parliament. When Kohl authorized German military technicians to fly aboard American AWACS planes enforcing the no-fly zone over Bosnia and Herzegovina, his own Foreign Minister's party challenged the action's constitutionality before the country's highest court. Many Germans don't even want their country to claim a seat on the United Nations Security Council, fearing that it will lead them back toward the world-power status that has in the past brought only catastrophe. Because Germany is the richest country in Europe, because it shares borders with nine other nations, and not least because of its history, this debate is profoundly important to the rest of the world.

"If I were to define Germany's national interest today, I would say first of all that it has to be compatible with European interests," Thierse told me. "We cannot have any interests that are different from those of Europe as a whole. But within that framework we can pursue policies that are especially important to us. More than anything else, that means working to stabilize the countries to the east. Germany faces Eastern Europe much more directly than does France or England. If things go badly there, we'll be the first to feel the impact. We have to make sure that the former Soviet Union doesn't degenerate into war or sectarian violence. The world should let us concentrate on that job, and not expect us to send troops to every place on earth where trouble breaks out."

Wrestling with such questions has plunged Germans deep into a collective identity crisis. During the decades of the Cold War both East Germany and West Germany had the luxury of not having to decide very much, since all key decisions were made for them in Moscow or Washington. The governments of both countries were content with their positions as subservient allies, differing from time to time with their superpowers but ultimately doing what was expected of them. Protected by nuclear umbrellas, both were able to concentrate on recovering from

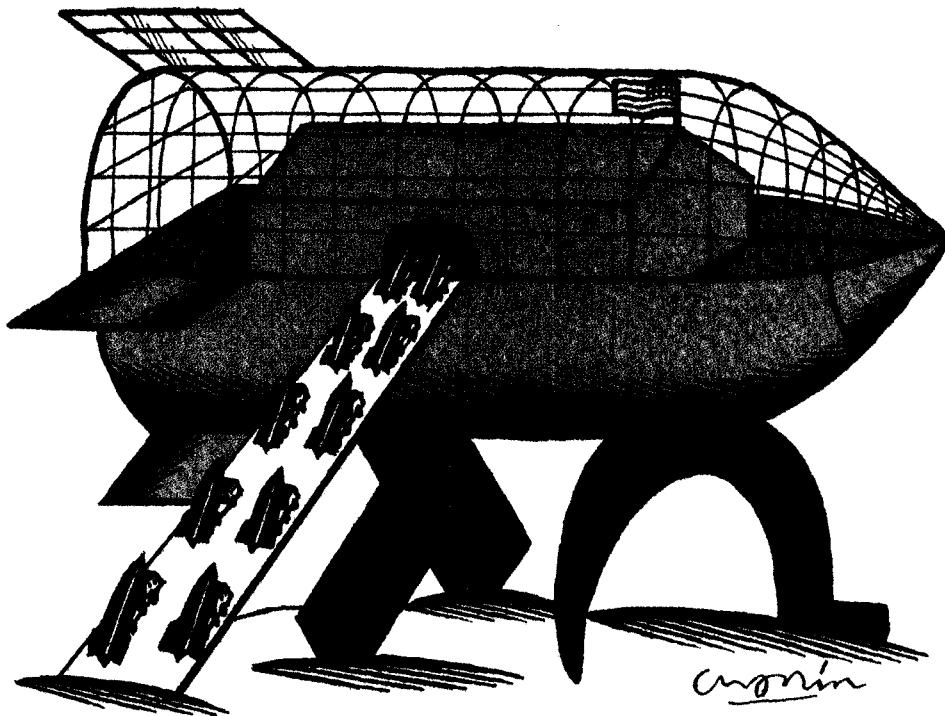
the devastation of the Second World War and building stable, prosperous societies. West Germany became a model of capitalist success, and East Germans enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the communist world. When young people today wear T-shirts bearing the slogan I WANT MY WALL BACK, they are expressing nostalgia for those days of comfortable security and fear of present and future uncertainties.

As great as today's challenges are, few doubt that Germany has the resources to confront them. Even in the troubled auto industry one can find glimmers of hope. Mercedes-Benz has just launched a major push to find new markets in the former Soviet Union. Volkswagen is moving into China, and has introduced a four-day work week at its German plants as an alternative to layoffs. Porsche is developing a new, more affordable car that it hopes will appeal to a wider clientele.

**W**OLFGANG Thierse, the Social Democratic intellectual turned politician, and Kurt Kasch, the conservative bank executive, agree that if government, labor, and business can forge a new and equitable social contract, Germans will accept the sacrifices necessary to make it work. Their central concern is that so far no one is forging that contract. Both men fear that if it is not forthcoming, their country will fall into the kind of social disarray that afflicts the United States.

"I was in Los Angeles recently," Thierse recalled with a shudder. "There you have giant mansions just a couple of kilometers away from miserable poverty. That is the nightmare. We have to avoid it at all costs."

Surrounded by his prize flowers, Hartmut Deckert spoke of the same dangers and the same opportunities. "We're moving toward a society where two thirds live well and one third lives poorly," he laments. "Of course, you can't compare us with the United States. We have only a few homeless people sleeping on the streets or lining up at soup kitchens. But things are much worse than they need to be, and they aren't getting better. When you look at what we have to work with, you realize we shouldn't be in this mess. All we need is someone to energize us, to tell us what needs to be done and how to do it. The right people need to fill that vacuum before the wrong people do." ☛



## Reagan and the Russians

*The Cold War ended despite President Reagan's arms buildup, not because of it—or so former President Gorbachev told the authors*

**S**HORTLY after the Berlin Wall was torn down, prominent political leaders and commentators concluded that the U.S. military buildup under President Ronald Reagan had won the Cold War. "We were right to increase our defense budget," Vice President Dan Quayle announced. "Had we acted differently, the liberalization that we are seeking today throughout the Soviet bloc would most likely not be taking place." Even Tom Wicker, a *New York Times* columnist with impeccable liberal credentials, reluctantly conceded that the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and the Reagan buildup "seemed to impress the

Soviets as a challenge that they might not be able to meet."

Hanging tough paid off. Forty years of arms competition, so the argument goes, brought the Soviet economy to the brink of collapse. The Vatican's Secretary of State, Agostino Cardinal Casaroli, said, "Ronald Reagan obligated the Soviet

Union to increase its military spending to the limits of insupportability."

When the Soviet Union could no longer afford the competition, its leaders decided to end the Cold War. A modified version of this argument holds that the American military buildup simply worsened the Soviet economic quandary; it was the straw

that broke the camel's back. Neither the strong nor the weak version of the proposition that American defense spending bankrupted the Soviet economy and forced an end to the Cold War is sustained by the evidence.

The Soviet Union's defense spending did not rise or fall in response to American military expenditures. Revised estimates by the Central Intelligence Agency indicate that Soviet expenditures on defense remained more or less constant throughout the 1980s. Neither the military buildup under Jimmy Carter and Reagan nor SDI had any real impact on gross spending levels in the USSR. At most SDI shifted the marginal allocation of defense rubles as some funds were allotted for developing countermeasures to ballistic defense.

If American defense spending had bankrupted the Soviet economy, forcing an end to the Cold War, Soviet defense spending should have declined as East-West relations improved. CIA estimates show that it remained relatively constant as a proportion of the Soviet gross national product during the 1980s, including Gorbachev's first four years in office. Soviet defense spending was not reduced until 1989 and did not decline nearly as rapidly as the overall economy.

To be sure, defense spending was an extraordinary burden on the Soviet economy. As early as the 1970s some officials warned Leonid Brezhnev that the economy would stagnate if the military continued to consume such a disproportionate share of resources. The General Secretary ignored their warnings, in large part because his authority depended on the support of a coalition in which defense and heavy industry were well represented. Brezhnev was also extraordinarily loyal to the Soviet military and fiercely proud of its performance. Soviet defense spending under Brezhnev and Gorbachev was primarily a response to internal political imperatives—to pressures from the Soviet version of the military-industrial complex. The Cold War and the high levels of American defense spending provided at most an opportunity for leaders of the Soviet military-industrial complex to justify their claims to preferential treatment. Even though the Cold War has ended and

by **Richard Ned Lebow**  
and **Janice Gross Stein**



the United States is no longer considered a threat by the current Russian leadership, Russian defense spending now consumes roughly as great a percentage of GNP as it did in the Brezhnev years.

The Soviet economy was not the only economy burdened by very high levels of defense spending. Israel, Taiwan, and North and South Korea have allocated a disproportionate share of resources to defense without bankrupting their economies. Indeed, some of these economies have grown dramatically. A far more persuasive reason for the Soviet economic decline is the rigid "command economy"

imposed by Stalin in the early 1930s. It did not reward individual or collective effort; it absolved Soviet producers from the discipline of the market; and it gave power to officials who could not be held accountable by consumers. Consequently much of the investment that went into the civilian sector of the economy was wasted. The command economy pre-dated the Cold War and was not a response to American military spending. The Soviet Union lost the Cold War, but it was not defeated by American defense spending.

**F**ORMER Soviet officials insist that Gorbachev's decisions to withdraw Soviet forces from Afghanistan and to end the arms race were made *despite* the Reagan buildup and SDI. In 1983 Gorbachev, then the youngest member of the politburo, visited Canada and spent long hours in private conversation with Aleksandr Yakovlev, then the ambassador in Ottawa. The two men talked openly for the first time about the deep problems that the Soviet Union faced and the urgent need for change. To their mutual surprise they agreed on the folly of the Soviet interven-

tion in Afghanistan and the necessity of ending the Cold War before it led to catastrophe for both superpowers. Both men hoped to reduce the burden of military spending in the USSR, and thus free resources for domestic reform and renewal.

By the time Gorbachev became General Secretary, in March of 1985, he was deeply committed to domestic reform and fundamental changes in Soviet foreign policy. "I, like many others," he observed recently, "knew that the USSR needed radical change. If I had not understood this, I would never have accepted the position of General Secretary." Within a month of assuming office he attempted to signal his interest in arms control to the United States by announcing a unilateral freeze on the deployment of Soviet intermediate-range missiles in Europe. The deployment of the SS-20, Yakovlev explains, was a "stupid and strange policy" that defied logical explanation. Yakovlev considered the deployment illogical and self-defeating before President Reagan announced SDI and the buildup of American military forces. He and Gorbachev were "united" on this issue.

*The Soviet Union's  
defense spending did not  
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expenditures.*

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WE MEASURE  
RELATIONSHIPS  
IN DECADES,  
IF NOT LIFETIMES.

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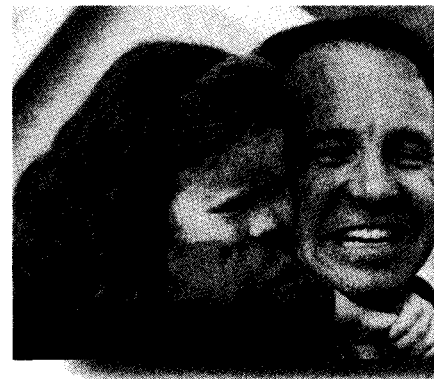
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ON THE STREET

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Gorbachev felt free to make a series of proposals for deep cuts in his country's nuclear arsenal because he was confident that the United States would not attack the Soviet Union. In conversation with his military advisers he rejected any plans that were premised on war with the West. Since he saw no threat of attack by the United States, Gorbachev was not intimidated by the military programs of the Reagan Administration. "These were unnecessary and wasteful expenditures that we were not going to match," he told us. If both superpowers were to avoid the growing risk of accidental war, they had to make deep cuts in their strategic forces. "This was an imperative of the nuclear age."

Reagan's commitment to SDI made it more difficult for Gorbachev to persuade his officials that arms control was in the Soviet interest. Conservatives, some of the military leadership, and spokesmen for defense-related industries insisted that SDI was proof of America's hostile intentions. In a contentious politburo meeting called to discuss arms control, Soviet armed forces chief of staff Marshal Ser-

gei Akhromeyev angrily warned that the Soviet people would not tolerate any weakening of Soviet defenses, according to Oleg Grinevsky, now Russia's ambassador to Sweden. Yakovlev insists that "Star Wars was exploited by hardliners to complicate Gorbachev's attempt to end the Cold War."

President Reagan continued to regard the Soviet Union as an "evil empire" and remained committed to his quest for a near-perfect ballistic-missile defense. To break the impasse, Gorbachev tried at the two leaders' summit meeting in Reykjavik to convince Reagan of his genuine interest in ending the arms race and restructuring their relationship on a collaborative basis. For the first time, the two men talked seriously about eliminating all their countries' ballistic missiles within ten years and significantly reducing their arsenals of nuclear weapons. Although the summit produced no agreement, Reagan became "human" and "likable" to Gorbachev and his advisers, and the President, convinced of Gorbachev's sincerity, began to modify his assessment of the Soviet Union and gradually became the lead-

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ing dove of his Administration. The Reykjavik summit, as Gorbachev had hoped, began a process of mutual reassurance and accommodation. That process continued after an initially hesitant George Bush became a full-fledged partner.

The Carter-Reagan military buildup did not defeat the Soviet Union. On the contrary, it prolonged the Cold War. Gorbachev's determination to reform an economy crippled in part by defense spending urged by special interests, but far more by structural rigidities, fueled his persistent search for an accommodation with the West. That persistence, not SDI, ended the Cold War. ♣



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# Prince Valiant's England

*A few brief shining moments*

**O**VER dinner one night nearly two decades ago I asked the illustrator Hal Foster why he had decided to set his comic strip *Prince Valiant* in sixth-century England. Well, he said, he needed King Arthur to figure in the strip, and the earliest historical reference to an actual leader in Britain named Arthur places him in the late fifth and ear-

**by Cullen Murphy**

ly sixth centuries, roughly a hundred years after the Romans had departed. Foster leaned a little closer, as if to impart a confidence. "It's also the case," he said, "that nobody knows very much about sixth-century England. That gives me a certain freedom."

I can appreciate Foster's point. Shortly after that conversation, with the help of

an undergraduate degree in medieval history and much instruction from Foster, I took over the writing of *Prince Valiant*, teaming up with my father, the illustrator John Cullen Murphy, who had already taken over the drawing. The fact that huge gaps exist in our knowledge of Britain's political history in early medieval times does offer considerable scope for invention. But Foster insisted on accuracy about medieval life to the extent that accuracy is possible, and readers of the strip are quick to hold my father and me to account, writing in a state of dudgeon when they suspect that anachronisms have crept in. I have engaged in spirited and protracted correspondence regarding such things as the ogham alphabet used by the Celtic druids, the technology of anvils, and the origin of the surname Fulda. Both of us do considerable research, mostly in libraries but sometimes also by visiting places that *Prince Valiant* would have known.

Prince Valiant, the son of King Aguar

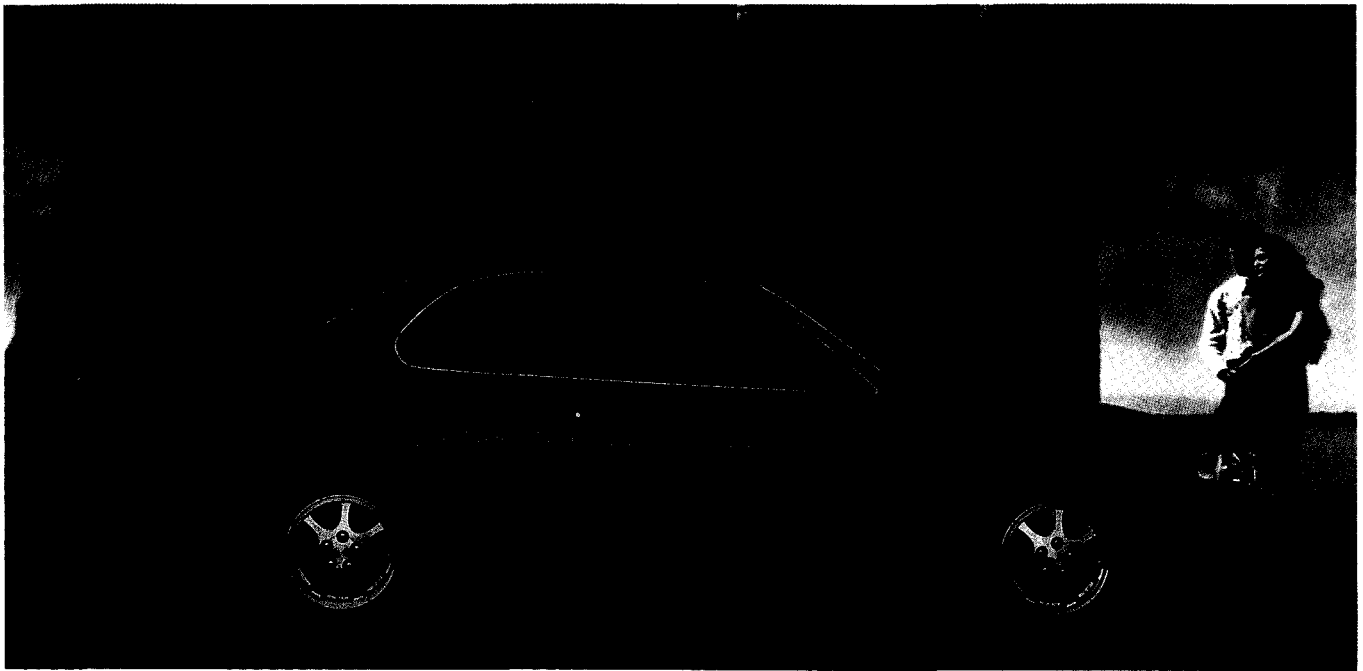
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*In the distance Dunkery Beacon, Exmoor National Park's highest point, rises above the Somerset landscape*



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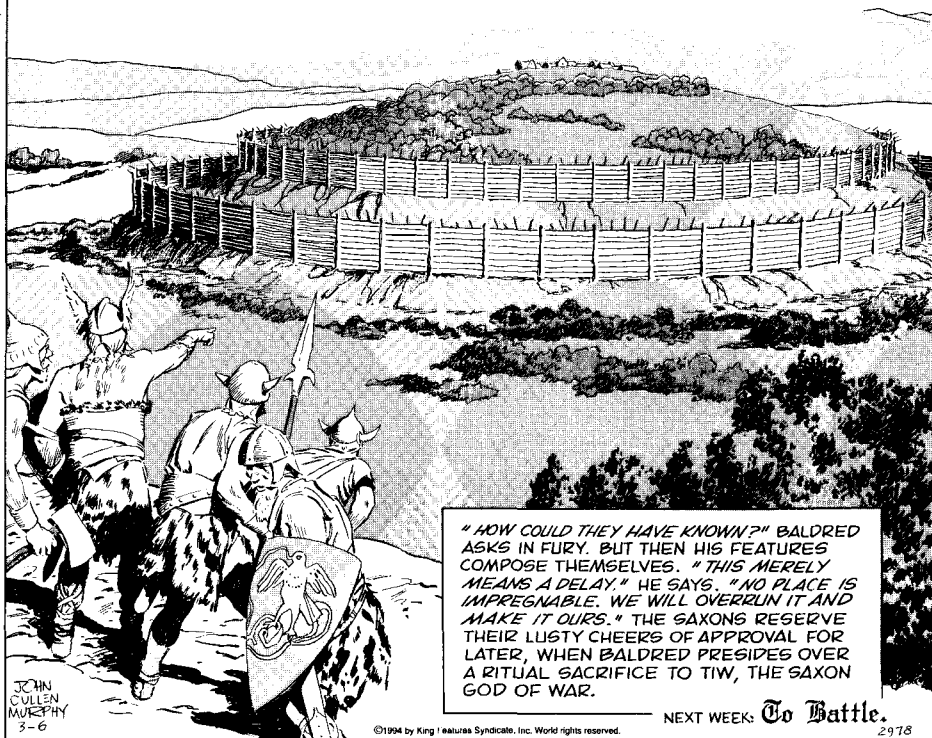
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THE SAXONS HAVE SCARCELY BEGUN THE JOURNEY INLAND WHEN SCOUTS RETURN. BALDRED, THE SAXON LEADER, HEARS THEM OUT, AND THEN MUTTERS A MIGHTY OATH. WITH THE OTHER CHIEFTAINS HE RACES AHEAD TO THE PLACE THE SCOUTS HAD SEEN. LOOMING ABOVE THE LANDSCAPE STANDS A FORTIFIED HILL, BRISTLING WITH PALISADES. FROM THIS REDOUBT KING ARTHUR'S FORCES WILL BE ABLE TO SWOOP DOWN ON THE SAXONS AT WILL, RETURNING ALWAYS TO SAFETY. MINING ORE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION.



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NEXT WEEK: **To Battle.**

2978

**A panel from the Prince Valiant episode that will appear in newspapers on March 6 and, on the opposite page, Cadbury Castle, which inspired it**

of Thule (a kingdom in what is now Norway) and the husband of Queen Aleta of the Misty Isles (a kingdom somewhere in the eastern Mediterranean), is a knight of King Arthur's Round Table. His infant granddaughter, Ingrid, will eventually inherit King Arthur's throne. The strip has perhaps a dozen major characters, including the villainous Mordred, and a cast of regulars numbering in the scores. Although the tumultuous saga of Prince Valiant's life has taken him to four continents, roughly half his time is spent in the vicinity of the fabled city of Camelot, the capital of a kingdom that mostly enjoys peace but faces territorial pressure from ever-growing numbers of invading Saxons.

I have been to the scene of many of Prince Valiant's adventures, in England and elsewhere, but until recently had never visited the geographic heartland of the Arthurian legends, the county of Somerset. My wife and I recently set out to rectify that situation. Our aim was to spend most of daylight in the sixth century or earlier—that is to say, in an environment

that Prince Valiant would have recognized—but to eat, sleep, and otherwise maintain ourselves in the late twentieth century. In many respects a fondness for the Middle Ages depends on keeping them at a distance.

**S**OMERSET, which lies less than two hours by car west of London, is a county that the English themselves have long held in high regard. In the great expanse of Exmoor it offers some of the brooding bleakness of Devon and Cornwall, but it has large swaths that display a softer, lusher mien. There are many state-ly homes in Somerset. Nearby there is one of the world's finest little cities, Bath, which was located in Somerset until gerrymandered into a new county called Avon. Bath, about which I'll have more to say later, has been an attraction for people at leisure for more than 2,000 years, and it is a good place to establish headquarters for a time if you intend to visit the Somerset region. My wife and I made it ours. We had a car (a necessity for autonomous day trips), but once ar-

rived at a selected staging area, we relied on the means of transportation that was most prevalent in medieval times: legs.

One of the most appealing aspects of England is that the countryside is intricately crisscrossed by what are called public footpaths, routes of access between here and there which have been used since medieval times (or even longer than that) and which property owners must not obstruct. The footpaths are marked, and there is no shortage of guidebooks to point out interesting routes. We found Nigel Vile's *Somerset Rambles* to be unerring, and took his suggestions for five- and ten-mile walks almost every day, encountering few people and plentiful traces of ancient times. The countryside is, of course, where antiquity most naturally (if sometimes unobtrusively) survives. On our rambles the low, golden light of late afternoon revealed the furrows of medieval ploughs. Our paths took us down lanes, overgrown and casual in appearance, that the Romans had built as major roads, their unremitting straightness giving them away. We crested hills that had been used as relay stations—a bonfire set on one, and then the next, and then the next—for the transmission of important news. On other hillsides circles of stones fending off purple and yellow gorse marked the locations of prehistoric hearths.

Encountering all this was happenstance, but it's the kind of happenstance one can count on. We did make three premeditated forays. One was to Cadbury Castle, a 500-foot-high mound a mile in diameter, during a longer walk through south Somerset. Forget any preconceived notions of "castle" in thinking about Cadbury: the only thing there now is landscape, although some of it is man-made. The significance of the mound is that it is identified in legend as having been the location of Camelot. Is there anything to this legend? Was there a Camelot? All that archaeologists and historians can say for sure is that Cadbury Castle was the site of an Iron Age hill fort, and that after a period of disuse it was refortified by someone early in the sixth century—Arthur's time. Against this circumstantial evidence may be set the observation of my wife, who, peering from under the hood of a slicker, noted that if it doesn't rain in Camelot until after sundown, as the musical claims, then this must not be the place. Whatever the case, massive earthworks, which would once

have been topped by staves and are now softened by vegetation, form rings upon the slopes. Shaping terrain in this fashion required enormous manpower and organization, and Cadbury offers a reminder that even in early medieval times people did not lack technological sophistication. It also provided an idea for an episode of the comic strip, in which Prince Valiant must oversee the quick construction of just such a fort.

Cadbury Castle has a gently domed and grassy summit bounded by a fringe of forest that gives the hill the appearance of a monk's tonsured crown. From the summit one looks across a broad plain, the Somerset Levels. To the northwest is the sugarloaf protuberance known as Glastonbury Tor, which was another of our intended destinations. In *Prince Valiant* the Levels are depicted as a treacherous bog known as Mucken Mire, which flanks the town of Camelot and King Arthur's Palace of Light on three sides. Bog is indeed what much of this area used to be—such parts of it as weren't under water entirely. Any high ground in the Levels existed essentially as islands, and one could travel from Cadbury Castle to Glastonbury Tor, a distance of some twelve miles, by boat—a fact reflected in Arthurian legends that refer to Glastonbury as the Isle of Avalon. In the later Middle Ages the bog was claimed for agriculture, and drained by an intricate network of channels known as rhines.

We climbed Glastonbury Tor, which crests at 520 feet. The winds blew in off

the Bristol Channel and were stiff. Below, the rhines sparkled in sunlight. Here and there dark columns of rain appeared to hold up the sky. The tor, topped by a medieval spire, can be seen from all parts of the lowlands, often appearing in one's line of sight unexpectedly, around a bend or over a rise. It is not hard to understand why the place had cultic significance in prehistoric times and acquired legendary associations in medieval ones. Glastonbury Abbey, at the tor's foot, is believed by some to be King Arthur's burial place; that this is in all likelihood untrue detracts not a whit from the haunting character of the place. Today a ruin, Glastonbury was one of the greatest monastic establishments in England, destroyed in 1539 when Henry VIII began suppressing England's monasteries. The abbot was taken to the top of Glastonbury Tor and hanged, drawn, and quartered. An Anglican minister today walks the grounds in a flowing black cassock, holding a short service on the hour five or six times a day at the grassy site where the main altar once stood.

Our third destination was Exmoor National Park. For aesthetic reasons the action in *Prince Valiant* frequently ranges over moorland: the vegetation is low, the views extend to far horizons, and evidence of prehistoric habitation abounds. Here on the moorlands the bones of the earth sometimes show through; this terrain in ancient times was as a result one of the easier places to go prospecting for various ores—crucial resources, then as now.

(And ones worth fighting over? Perhaps after a Saxon incursion? Might that be why Prince Valiant must build a hill fort?) Exmoor is wild but accessible. Anyone who has frequented the visitors' center at a national park in the United States knows how such a place is helpfully set up to accommodate everyone from the most casual tourist to the most experienced outdoorsman. The visitors' center lying



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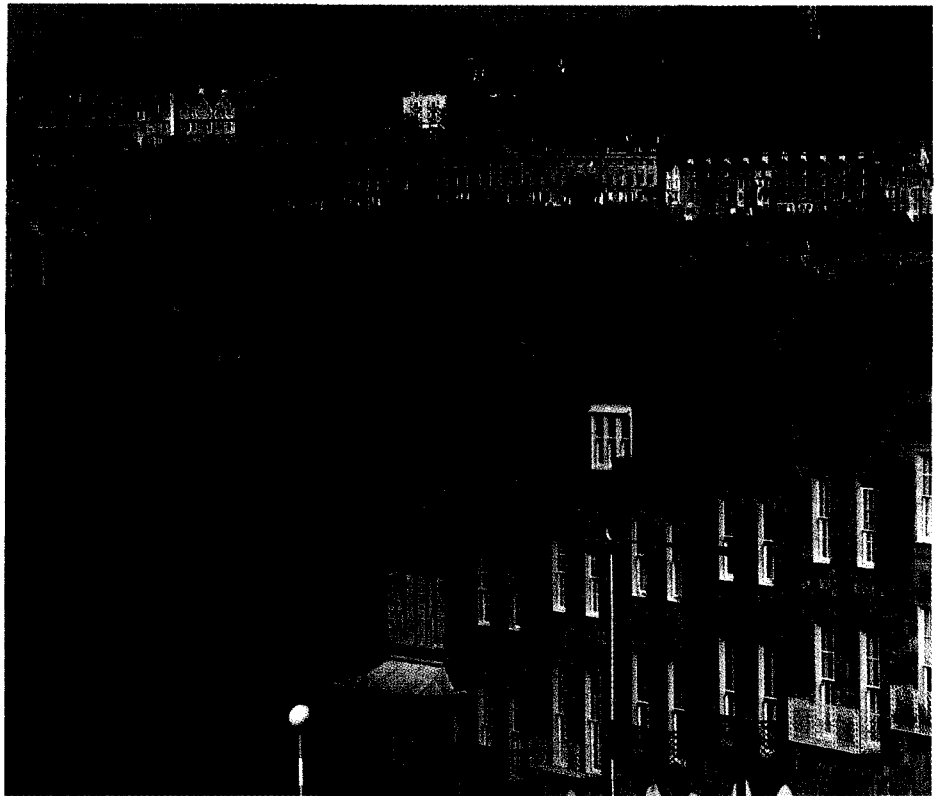


at the approach to Exmoor, in the town of Dunster, is set up the same way, its walls lined with shelves holding several varieties of maps along with books and pamphlets on local history and the natural world nearby.

The finest walk of our trip occurred in Exmoor. It took us from a thick deciduous forest, which occupies the ravines that descend from the moorland mountains, up to the summits of the mountains themselves, along a ridge in the direction of some neolithic barrows, down into narrow roads among hedgerows, to a small, medieval church, and finally, for two miles, along an aisle between ancient oaks—a gnarled forest Arthur Rackham might have imagined—which led to where we had started. A short drive brought us to a beach on the Bristol Channel just in time to see a rainbow over the far coast of Wales. Thank you, Nigel Vile.

**A**S for Bath, it is a city that Prince Valiant would have known. It lies on the Fosse Way, the Roman military highway that slashed diagonally across Britain from Topsham in the southwest to Lincoln in the northeast—a road that Prince Valiant uses frequently in the strip. Prince Valiant would also have known about the hot springs in Bath, which made it a cultic center in pre-Roman times and a resort city after the Romans arrived (they gave it the name *Aquae Solis*, meaning “Waters of the Sun”). The Fosse Way survives in and around Bath as the A367 motorway. The extensive ruins of the Roman baths, partly restored, occupy a portion of the city

PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE: JOHN FERRO SIMS



*Up and down the hillsides, the elegant Georgian charm of Bath*

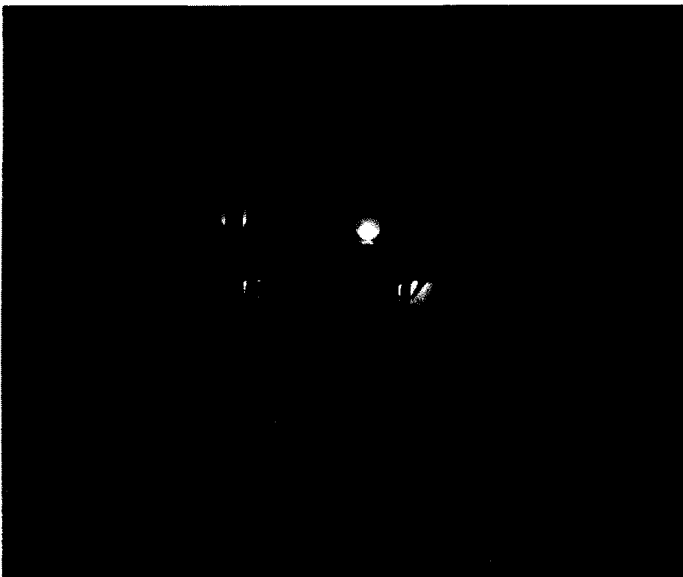
center near the medieval abbey, and other Roman relics can be viewed in an adjacent exhibit area. Steam rises from the waters, which come forth from the earth at a rate of 1,170,000 liters a day and at a constant temperature of 116 degrees Fahrenheit.

The springs gave Bath its existence and its name, but they do not explain its appeal. Bath is built on several hills, through which the River Avon flows, and most of the city is today Georgian in character, the work largely of the architect John Wood.

This is not the brick Georgian architecture that marks the residential squares of London and Dublin but rather the stone Georgian architecture one finds in larger public buildings, here applied to buildings of every kind, block after block. The stone is yellow-gray and universal, and it gives the city a happy consistency, which makes the place a delight even though the buildings

seem not to be trying for effect. The scale is also humane. Inviting, sometimes eccentric alleyways lead off the grander streets. Because the city is compact, walking gets one anywhere.

Bath is prosperous. It has for three centuries been the West Country outpost of choice, the *urbs in rure*, for wealthy Londoners; some of the flavor of Bath prior to the Victorian era can be found in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and other novels. The city has a full complement of international stores—The Gap, Laura Ashley, Mondri—but they by no means dominate the many handsome shops of local pedigree. We were thankful for the presence of a Waterstone's bookstore. Bookstores are always a good place to stop when visiting an unfamiliar place; in addition to the obvious resources they offer, they tend to be information clearinghouses for the community as a whole. The Waterstone's in Bath stocks a complete set of the Landranger series of ordnance-survey maps of Great Britain, which show terrain at a scale of 1:50,000—meaning that a mile on these maps is about an inch and a quarter long. The maps indicate every feature that anyone, even Prince Valiant, could care to know about: tumuli, Roman roads, battle sites, and all the public footpaths (not to



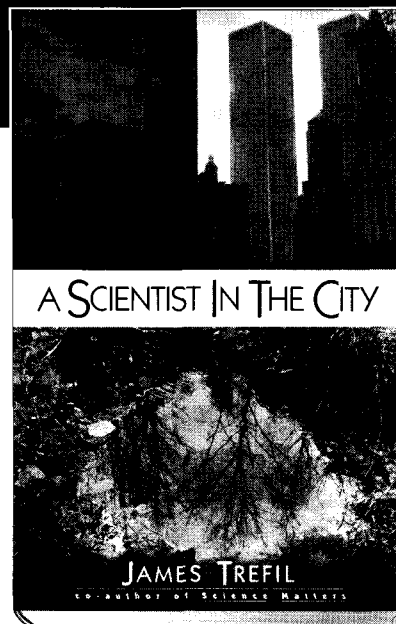
mention the more usual things, such as highways, railroads, and towns). A valuable adjunct to the ordnance-survey maps is the book *The Medieval Landscape of Somerset*, edited by Michael Aston, which explains the forms of ancient land management accounting for various aspects of the county's current appearance. Somerset is laced, for example, with hedgerows, many of which go back to the Middle Ages; one aerial photograph in Aston's book prompted an expedition to find a long stretch of exceedingly narrow fields between Cheddar and Draycott which were laid out by the Saxons.

The high quality of the food we ate came as something of a surprise. The idea that one can base a successful cuisine on unusual combinations of fresh local produce and game may not have reached all of England, but it has reached Bath. The restaurant at the Queensberry Hotel, where we stayed, was persuasive evidence of this, as were a number of other restaurants. (The menus in the windows, carefully describing the sometimes counterintuitive contents of each dish, give such restaurants away immediately.) The Queensberry Hotel, located in what was once the home of the Marquis of Queensberry, offers everything I want from a hotel: it is quiet without being stodgy, elegant but not overdone, and it provides service that is efficient but not overbearing. It also has the advantage of being small—only twenty-two rooms. (The price of a double room ranges from \$135 to \$225. For more information, write to the Queensberry Hotel, Russel Street, Bath, BA1 2QF, United Kingdom; telephone 011-44-225-447928; or fax 011-44-225-446065.) Designed by John Wood, the Queensberry is of a piece with the city itself. On the mantel of our fireplace the staff had left copies of *Northanger Abbey* and a useful old book called *The Building of Bath*. Our room, No. 10, looked out upon the irregular back upper stories of one of Bath's great adornments, a series of contiguous Georgian dwellings known as the Circus, which encloses a circular park.

When he was a lad, Prince Valiant was told by the witch Horrit that he would never know contentment, a prophecy that has been borne out by his subsequent life. I'd write him into Room 10, but I'm afraid he's busy with that fort. ☼

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T R A V E L B U G S

# THE COMING ANARCHY

by ROBERT D. KAPLAN

*How scarcity,  
crime, overpopulation,  
tribalism, and disease  
are rapidly destroying the social  
fabric of our planet*

T

HE Minister's eyes were like egg yolks, an aftereffect of some of the many illnesses, malaria especially, endemic in his country. There was also an irrefutable sadness in his eyes. He spoke in a slow and creaking voice, the voice of hope about to expire. Flame trees, coconut palms, and a ballpoint-blue Atlantic composed the background. None of it seemed beautiful, though. "In forty-five years I have never seen things so bad. We did not manage ourselves well after the British departed. But what we have now is something worse—the revenge of the poor, of the social failures, of the people least able to bring up children in a modern society." Then he referred to the recent coup in the West African country Sierra Leone. "The boys who took power in Sierra Leone come from houses like

this." The Minister jabbed his finger at a corrugated metal shack teeming with children. "In three months these boys confiscated all the official Mercedes, Volvos, and BMWs

***Right: outside Monrovia,  
Liberia, civilian victims  
of civil war, dumped near the  
airport. Far right: govern-  
ment troops in Sierra Leone  
reoccupy a rebel position***



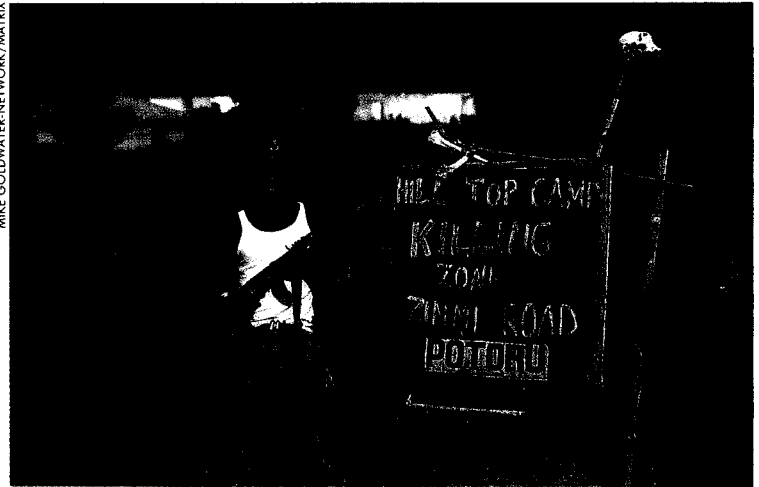




and willfully wrecked them on the road.” The Minister mentioned one of the coup’s leaders, Solomon Anthony Joseph Musa, who shot the people who had paid for his schooling, “in order to erase the humiliation and mitigate the power his middle-class sponsors held over him.”

Tyranny is nothing new in Sierra Leone or in the rest of West Africa. But it is now part and parcel of an increasing lawlessness that is far more significant than any coup, rebel incursion, or episodic experiment in democracy. Crime was what my friend—a top-ranking African official whose life would be threatened were I to identify him more precisely—really wanted to talk about. Crime is what makes West Africa a natural point of departure for my report on what the political character of our planet is likely to be in the twenty-first century.

The cities of West Africa at night are some of the unsafest places in the world. Streets are unlit; the police often lack gasoline for their vehicles; armed burglars, carjackers, and muggers proliferate. “The government in Sierra Leone has



no writ after dark,” says a foreign resident, shrugging. When I was in the capital, Freetown, last September, eight men armed with AK-47s broke into the house of an American man. They tied him up and stole everything of value. Forget Miami: direct flights between the United States and the Murtala Muhammed Airport, in neighboring Nigeria’s largest city, Lagos, have been suspended by order of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation because of ineffective security at the terminal and its environs. A State Department report cited the airport for “extortion by law-enforcement and immigration officials.” This is one of the few times that the U.S. government has embargoed a foreign airport for reasons that are linked purely to crime. In Abidjan, effectively the capital of the Côte d’Ivoire, or Ivory Coast, restaurants have stick- and gun-wielding guards who walk you the fifteen feet or so between your car and the entrance, giving you an eerie taste of what American cities might be like in the future. An Italian ambassador was killed by gunfire when robbers invaded an Abidjan restaurant. The family of the Nigerian ambassador

**S** **IERRA**

**LEONE IS A MICROCOSM  
OF WHAT IS OCCURRING  
IN WEST AFRICA AND  
MUCH OF THE UNDER-  
DEVELOPED WORLD: THE  
WITHERING AWAY OF  
CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS,  
THE RISE OF TRIBAL AND  
REGIONAL DOMAINS,  
THE UNCHECKED SPREAD  
OF DISEASE, AND  
THE GROWING PERVA-  
SIVENESS OF WAR.**

was tied up and robbed at gunpoint in the ambassador's residence. After university students in the Ivory Coast caught bandits who had been plaguing their dorms, they executed them by hanging tires around their necks and setting the tires on fire. In one instance Ivorian policemen stood by and watched the "necklacings," afraid to intervene. Each time I went to the Abidjan bus terminal, groups of young men with restless, scanning eyes surrounded my taxi, putting their hands all over the windows, demanding "tips" for carrying my luggage even though I had only a rucksack. In cities in six West African countries I saw similar young men everywhere—hordes of them. They were like loose molecules in a very unstable social fluid, a fluid that was clearly on the verge of igniting.

"You see," my friend the Minister told me, "in the villages of Africa it is perfectly natural to feed at any table and lodge in any hut. But in the cities this communal existence no longer holds. You must pay for lodging and be invited for food. When young men find out that their relations cannot put them up, they become lost. They join other migrants and slip gradually into the criminal process."

"In the poor quarters of Arab North Africa," he continued, "there is much less crime, because Islam provides a social anchor: of education and indoctrination. Here in West Africa we have a lot of superficial Islam and superficial Christianity. Western religion is undermined by animist beliefs not suitable to a moral society, because they are based on irrational spirit power. Here spirits are used to wreak vengeance by one person against another, or one group against another." Many of the atrocities in the Liberian civil war have been tied to belief in *juju* spirits, and the BBC has reported, in its magazine *Focus on Africa*, that in the civil fighting in adjacent Sierra Leone, rebels were said to have "a young woman with them who would go to the front naked, always walking backwards and looking in a mirror to see where she was going. This made her invisible, so that she

could cross to the army's positions and there bury charms . . . to improve the rebels' chances of success."

Finally my friend the Minister mentioned polygamy. Designed for a pastoral way of life, polygamy continues to thrive in sub-Saharan Africa even though it is increasingly uncommon in Arab North Africa. Most youths I met on the road in West Africa told me that they were from "extended" families, with a mother in one place and a father in another. Translated to an urban environment, loose family structures are largely responsible for the world's highest birth rates and the explosion of the HIV virus on the continent. Like the communalism and animism, they provide a weak shield against the corrosive social effects of life in cities. In those cities African culture is being redefined while desertification and deforestation—also tied to overpopulation—drive more and more African peasants out of the countryside.

**A PREMONITION OF  
THE FUTURE**

**W**EST Africa is becoming *the* symbol of worldwide demographic, environmental, and societal stress, in which criminal anarchy emerges as the real "strategic" danger. Disease, overpopulation, unprovoked crime, scarcity of resources, refugee migrations, the increasing erosion of nation-states and international borders, and the empowerment of private armies, security firms, and international drug cartels are now most tellingly demonstrated through a West African prism. West Africa provides an appropriate introduction to the issues, often extremely unpleasant to discuss, that will soon confront our civilization. To remap the political earth the way it will be a few decades hence—as I intend to do in this article—I find I must begin with West Africa.

There is no other place on the planet where political maps are so deceptive—where, in fact, they tell such lies—as in West Africa. Start with Sierra Leone. According to the map, it is a nation-state of defined borders, with a government in control of its territory. In truth the Sierra Leonian government, run by a twenty-seven-year-old army captain, Valentine Strasser, controls Freetown by day and by day also controls part of the rural interior. In the government's territory the national army is an unruly rabble threatening drivers and passengers at most checkpoints. In the other part of the country units of two separate armies from the war in Liberia have taken up residence, as has an army of Sierra Leonian rebels. The government force fighting the rebels is full of renegade commanders who have aligned themselves with disaffected village chiefs. A pre-modern formlessness governs the battlefield, evoking the wars in medieval Europe prior to the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which ushered in the era of organized nation-states.

As a consequence, roughly 400,000 Sierra Leonians are internally displaced, 280,000 more have fled to neighboring Guinea, and another 100,000 have fled to Liberia, even as

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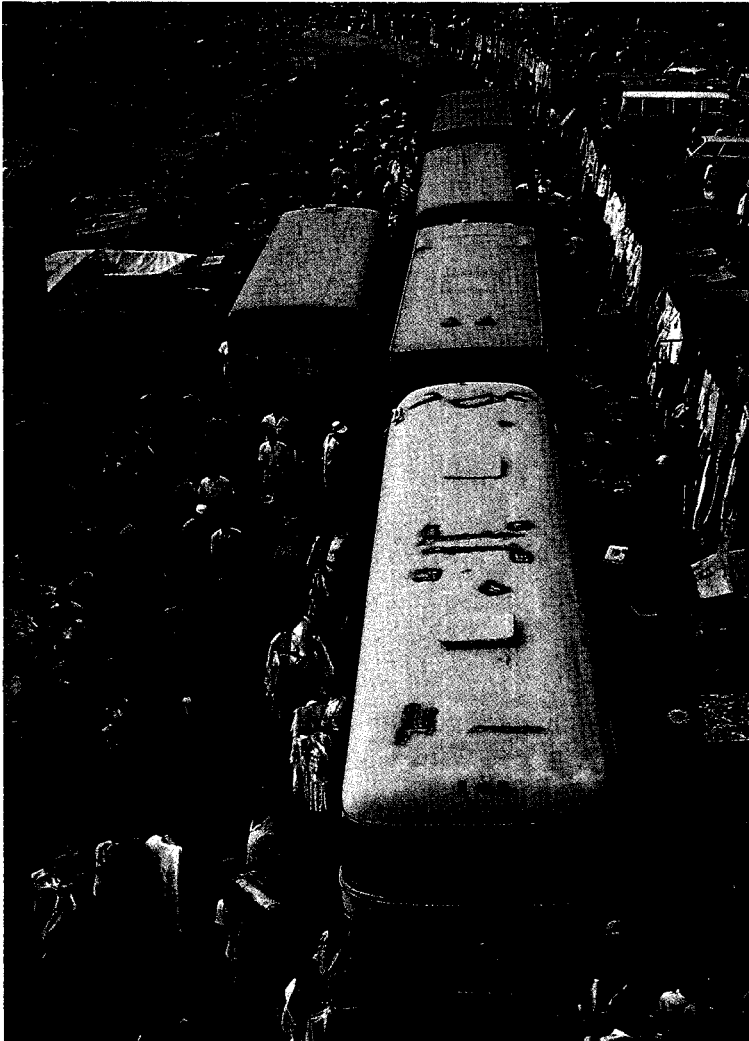
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400,000 Liberians have fled to Sierra Leone. The third largest city in Sierra Leone, Gondama, is a displaced-persons camp. With an additional 600,000 Liberians in Guinea and 250,000 in the Ivory Coast, the borders dividing these four countries have become largely meaningless. Even in quiet zones none of the governments except the Ivory Coast's maintains the schools, bridges, roads, and police forces in a manner necessary for functional sovereignty. The Koranko ethnic group in northeastern Sierra Leone does all its trading in Guinea. Sierra Leonian diamonds are more likely to be sold in Liberia than in Freetown. In the eastern



THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: BETTY PRESS/WOODFIN CAMP

provinces of Sierra Leone you can buy Liberian beer but not the local brand.

In Sierra Leone, as in Guinea, as in the Ivory Coast, as in Ghana, most of the primary rain forest and the secondary bush is being destroyed at an alarming rate. I saw convoys of trucks bearing majestic hardwood trunks to coastal ports. When Sierra Leone achieved its independence, in 1961, as much as 60 percent of the country was primary rain forest. Now six percent is. In the Ivory Coast the proportion has fallen from 38 percent to eight percent. The deforestation has led to soil erosion, which has led to more flooding and

more mosquitoes. Virtually everyone in the West African interior has some form of malaria.

Sierra Leone is a microcosm of what is occurring, albeit in a more tempered and gradual manner, throughout West Africa and much of the underdeveloped world: the withering away of central governments, the rise of tribal and regional domains, the unchecked spread of disease, and the growing pervasiveness of war. West Africa is reverting to the Africa of the Victorian atlas. It consists now of a series of coastal trading posts, such as Freetown and Conakry, and an interior that, owing to violence, volatility, and disease, is again becoming, as Graham Greene once observed, "blank" and "unexplored." However, whereas Greene's vision implies a certain romance, as in the somnolent and charmingly seedy Freetown of his celebrated novel *The Heart of the Matter*, it is Thomas Malthus, the philosopher of demographic doom-day, who is now the prophet of West Africa's future. And West Africa's future, eventually, will also be that of most of the rest of the world.

CONSIDER "Chicago." I refer not to Chicago, Illinois, but to a slum district of Abidjan, which the young toughs in the area have named after the American city. ("Washington" is another poor section of Abidjan.) Although Sierra Leone is widely regarded as beyond salvage, the Ivory Coast has been considered an African success story, and Abidjan has been called "the Paris of West Africa." Success, however, was built on two artificial factors: the high price of cocoa, of which the Ivory Coast is the world's leading producer, and the talents of a French expatriate community, whose members have helped run the government and the private sector. The expanding cocoa economy made the Ivory Coast a magnet for migrant workers from all over West Africa: between a third and a half of the country's population is now non-Ivorian, and the figure could be as high as 75 percent in Abidjan. During the 1980s cocoa prices fell and the French began to leave. The skyscrapers of the Paris of West Africa are a façade. Perhaps 15 percent of Abidjan's population of three million people live in shantytowns like Chicago and Washington, and the vast majority live in places that are not much better. Not all of these places appear on any of the readily available maps. This is another indication of how political maps are the products of tired conventional wisdom and, in the Ivory Coast's case, of an elite that will ultimately be forced to relinquish power.

Chicago, like more and more of Abidjan, is a slum in the bush: a checkerwork of corrugated zinc roofs and walls made of cardboard and black plastic wrap. It is located in a gully teeming with coconut palms and oil palms, and is ravaged by flooding. Few residents have easy access to electricity, a sewage system, or a clean water supply. The crumbly red

**The press of population.**  
**Right: doing the wash in a lagoon in Abidjan, the Ivory Coast. Left: the nearly impassable downtown of Lagos, Nigeria.**

laterite earth crawls with foot-long lizards both inside and outside the shacks. Children defecate in a stream filled with garbage and pigs, droning with malarial mosquitoes. In this stream women do the washing. Young unemployed men spend their time drinking beer, palm wine, and gin while gambling on pinball games constructed out of rotting wood and rusty nails. These are the same youths who rob houses in more prosperous Ivorian neighborhoods at night. One man I met, Damba Tesele, came to Chicago from Burkina Faso in 1963. A cook by profession, he has four wives and thirty-two children, not one of whom has made it to high school. He has

demographic present—and even more of the future—than any idyllic junglescape of women balancing earthen jugs on their heads, illustrates why the Ivory Coast, once a model of Third World success, is becoming a case study in Third World catastrophe.

President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who died last December at the age of about ninety, left behind a weak cluster of political parties and a leaden bureaucracy that discourages foreign investment. Because the military is small and the non-Ivorian population large, there is neither an obvious force to maintain order nor a sense of nationhood that would lessen



seen his shanty community destroyed by municipal authorities seven times since coming to the area. Each time he and his neighbors rebuild. Chicago is the latest incarnation.

Fifty-five percent of the Ivory Coast's population is urban, and the proportion is expected to reach 62 percent by 2000. The yearly net population growth is 3.6 percent. This means that the Ivory Coast's 13.5 million people will become 39 million by 2025, when much of the population will consist of urbanized peasants like those of Chicago. But don't count on the Ivory Coast's still existing then. Chicago, which is more indicative of Africa's and the Third World's

the need for such enforcement. The economy has been shrinking since the mid-1980s. Though the French are working assiduously to preserve stability, the Ivory Coast faces a possibility worse than a coup: an anarchic implosion of criminal violence—an urbanized version of what has already happened in Somalia. Or it may become an African Yugoslavia, but one without mini-states to replace the whole.

Because the demographic reality of West Africa is a countryside draining into dense slums by the coast, ultimately the region's rulers will come to reflect the values of these shantytowns. There are signs of this already in Sierra Leone—



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Sony ES Scholarship Winner,  
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and in Togo, where the dictator Etienne Eyadema, in power since 1967, was nearly toppled in 1991, not by democrats but by thousands of youths whom the London-based magazine *West Africa* described as “Soweto-like stone-throwing adolescents.” Their behavior may herald a regime more brutal than Eyadema’s repressive one.

The fragility of these West African “countries” impressed itself on me when I took a series of bush taxis along the Gulf of Guinea, from the Togolese capital of Lomé, across Ghana, to Abidjan. The 400-mile journey required two full days of driving, because of stops at two border crossings and an additional eleven customs stations, at each of which my fellow passengers had their bags searched. I had to change money twice and repeatedly fill in currency-declaration forms. I had to bribe a Togolese immigration official with the equivalent of eighteen dollars before he would agree to put an exit stamp on my passport. Nevertheless, smuggling across these borders is rampant. *The London Observer* has reported that in 1992 the equivalent of \$856 million left West Africa for Europe in the form of “hot cash” assumed to be laundered drug money. International cartels have discovered the utility of weak, financially strapped West African regimes.

The more fictitious the actual sovereignty, the more severe border authorities seem to be in trying to prove otherwise. Getting visas for these states can be as hard as crossing their borders. The Washington embassies of Sierra Leone and Guinea—the two poorest nations on earth, according to a 1993 United Nations report on “human development”—asked for letters from my bank (in lieu of prepaid round-trip tickets) and also personal references, in order to prove that I had sufficient means to sustain myself during my visits. I was reminded of my visa and currency hassles while traveling to the communist states of Eastern Europe, particularly East Germany and Czechoslovakia, before those states collapsed.

Ali A. Mazrui, the director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies at the State University of New York at Binghamton, predicts that West Africa—indeed, the whole continent—is on the verge of large-scale border upheaval. Mazrui writes,

In the 21st century France will be withdrawing from West Africa as she gets increasingly involved in the affairs [of Europe]. France’s West African sphere of influence will be filled by Nigeria—a more natural hegemonic power. . . . It will be under those circumstances that Nigeria’s own boundaries are likely to expand to incorporate the Republic of Niger (the Hausa link), the Republic of Benin (the Yoruba link) and conceivably Cameroon.

**T**HE future could be more tumultuous, and bloodier, than Mazrui dares to say. France *will* withdraw from former colonies like Benin, Togo, Niger, and the Ivory Coast, where it has been propping up local currencies. It will do so not only because its attention will be diverted to new challenges

in Europe and Russia but also because younger French officials lack the older generation’s emotional ties to the ex-colonies. However, even as Nigeria attempts to expand, it, too, is likely to split into several pieces. The State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research recently made the following points in an analysis of Nigeria:

Prospects for a transition to civilian rule and democratization are slim. . . . The repressive apparatus of the state security service . . . will be difficult for any future civilian government to control. . . . The country is becoming increasingly ungovernable. . . . Ethnic and regional splits are deepening, a situation made worse by an increase in the number of states from 19 to 30 and a doubling in the number of local governing authorities; religious cleavages are more serious; Muslim fundamentalism and evangelical Christian militancy are on the rise; and northern Muslim anxiety over southern [Christian] control of the economy is intense . . . the will to keep Nigeria together is now very weak.

Given that oil-rich Nigeria is a bellwether for the region—its population of roughly 90 million equals the populations of all the other West African states combined—it is apparent that Africa faces cataclysms that could make the Ethiopian and Somalian famines pale in comparison. This is especially so because Nigeria’s population, including that of its largest city, Lagos, whose crime, pollution, and overcrowding make it the cliché par excellence of Third World urban dysfunction, is set to double during the next twenty-five years, while the country continues to deplete its natural resources.

Part of West Africa’s quandary is that although its population belts are horizontal, with habitation densities increasing as one travels south away from the Sahara and toward the tropical abundance of the Atlantic littoral, the borders erected by European colonialists are vertical, and therefore at cross-purposes with demography and topography. Satellite photos depict the same reality I experienced in the bush taxi: the Lomé-Abidjan coastal corridor—indeed, the entire stretch of coast from Abidjan eastward to Lagos—is one burgeoning megalopolis that by any rational economic and geographical standard should constitute a single sovereignty, rather than the five (the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria) into which it is currently divided.

As many internal African borders begin to crumble, a more impenetrable boundary is being erected that threatens to isolate the continent as a whole: the wall of disease. Merely to visit West Africa in some degree of safety, I spent about \$500 for a hepatitis B vaccination series and other disease prophylaxis. Africa may today be more dangerous in this regard than it was in 1862, before antibiotics, when the explorer Sir Richard Francis Burton described the health situation on the continent as “deadly, a Golgotha, a Jehannum.” Of the approximately 12 million people worldwide whose blood is HIV-positive, 8 million are in Africa. In the capital of the Ivory Coast, whose modern road system only





**THE BOMBAY SAPPHIRE MARTINI. AS SCULPTED BY ROBERT LEE MORRIS.**

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helps to spread the disease, 10 percent of the population is HIV-positive. And war and refugee movements help the virus break through to more-remote areas of Africa. Alan Greenberg, M.D., a representative of the Centers for Disease Control in Abidjan, explains that in Africa the HIV virus and tuberculosis are now “fast-forwarding each other.” Of the approximately 4,000 newly diagnosed tuberculosis patients in Abidjan, 45 percent were also found to be HIV-positive. As African birth rates soar and slums proliferate, some experts worry that viral mutations and hybridizations might, just conceivably, result in a form of the AIDS virus that is easier to catch than the present strain.

It is malaria that is most responsible for the disease wall that threatens to separate Africa and other parts of the Third World from more-developed regions of the planet in the twenty-first century. Carried by mosquitoes, malaria, unlike AIDS, is easy to catch. Most people in sub-Saharan Africa have recurring bouts of the disease throughout their entire lives, and it is mutating into increasingly deadly forms. “The

great gift of Malaria is utter apathy,” wrote Sir Richard Burton, accurately portraying the situation in much of the Third World today. Visitors to malaria-afflicted parts of the planet are protected by a new drug, mefloquine, a side effect of which is vivid, even violent, dreams. But a strain of cerebral malaria resistant to mefloquine is now on the offensive. Consequently, defending oneself against malaria in Africa is becoming more and more like defending oneself against violent crime. You engage in “behavior modification”: not going out at dusk, wearing mosquito repellent all the time.

And the cities keep growing. I got a general sense of the future while driving from the airport to downtown Conakry, the capital of Guinea. The forty-five-minute journey in heavy traffic was through one never-ending shantytown: a nightmarish Dickensian spectacle to which Dickens himself would never have given credence. The corrugated metal shacks and scabrous walls were coated with black slime. Stores were built out of

rusty shipping containers, junked cars, and jumbles of wire mesh. The streets were one long puddle of floating garbage. Mosquitoes and flies were everywhere. Children, many of whom had protruding bellies, seemed as numerous as ants. When the tide went out, dead rats and the skeletons of cars were exposed on the mucky beach. In twenty-eight years Guinea’s population will double if growth goes on at current rates. Hardwood logging continues at a madcap speed, and people flee the Guinean countryside for Conakry. It seemed to me that here, as elsewhere in Africa and the Third World, man is challenging nature far beyond its limits, and nature is now beginning to take its revenge.

**A**FRICA may be as relevant to the future character of world politics as the Balkans were a hundred years ago, prior to the two Balkan wars and the First World War. Then the threat was the collapse of empires and the birth of nations based solely on tribe. Now the threat is more elemental: *nature unchecked*. Africa’s immediate future could be very bad. The coming upheaval, in which foreign embassies are shut down, states collapse, and contact with the outside world takes place through dangerous, disease-ridden coastal trading posts, will loom large in the century we are entering. (Nine of twenty-one U.S. foreign-aid missions to be closed over the next three years are in Africa—a prologue to a consolidation of U.S. embassies themselves.) Precisely because much of Africa is set to go over the edge at a time when the Cold War has ended, when environmental and demographic stress in other parts of the globe is becoming critical, and when the post-First World War system of nation-states—not just in the Balkans but perhaps also in the Middle East—is about to be toppled, Africa suggests what war, borders, and ethnic politics will be like a few decades hence.

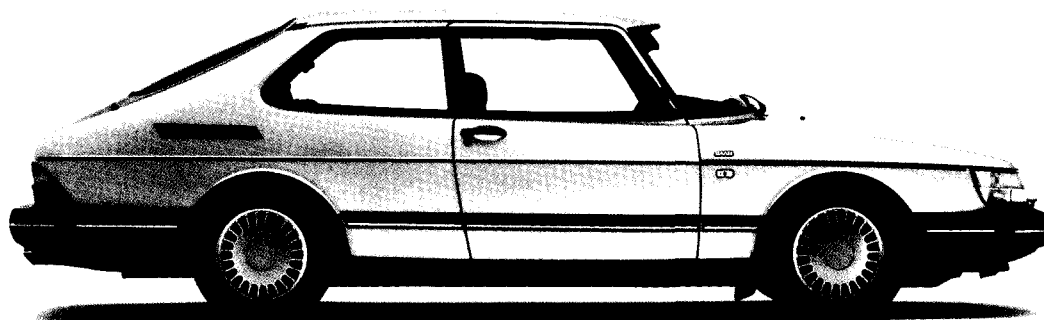
To understand the events of the next fifty years, then, one must understand environmental scarcity, cultural and racial clash, geographic destiny, and the transformation of war. The order in which I have named these is not accidental. Each concept except the first relies partly on the one or ones before it, meaning that the last two—new approaches to mapmaking and to warfare—are the most important. They are also the least understood. I will now look at each idea, drawing upon the work of specialists and also my own travel experiences in various parts of the globe besides Africa, in order to fill in the blanks of a new political atlas.

#### THE ENVIRONMENT AS A HOSTILE POWER

**F**OR a while the media will continue to ascribe riots and other violent upheavals abroad mainly to ethnic and religious conflict. But as these conflicts multiply, it will become apparent that something else is afoot, making more and more places like Nigeria, India, and Brazil ungovernable.

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CENTURY. IT IS MUTATING  
INTO INCREASINGLY  
DEADLY FORMS.**

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WERE THE STARES.



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THEN THE WORLDWIDE  
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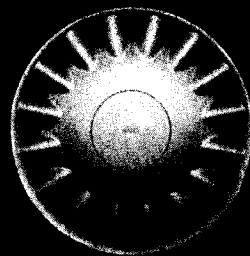
It had front-wheel drive, a fuel-efficient engine and a curious profile housing a steel safety cage. Here was a car that seemed to flout the automotive trends of its day.

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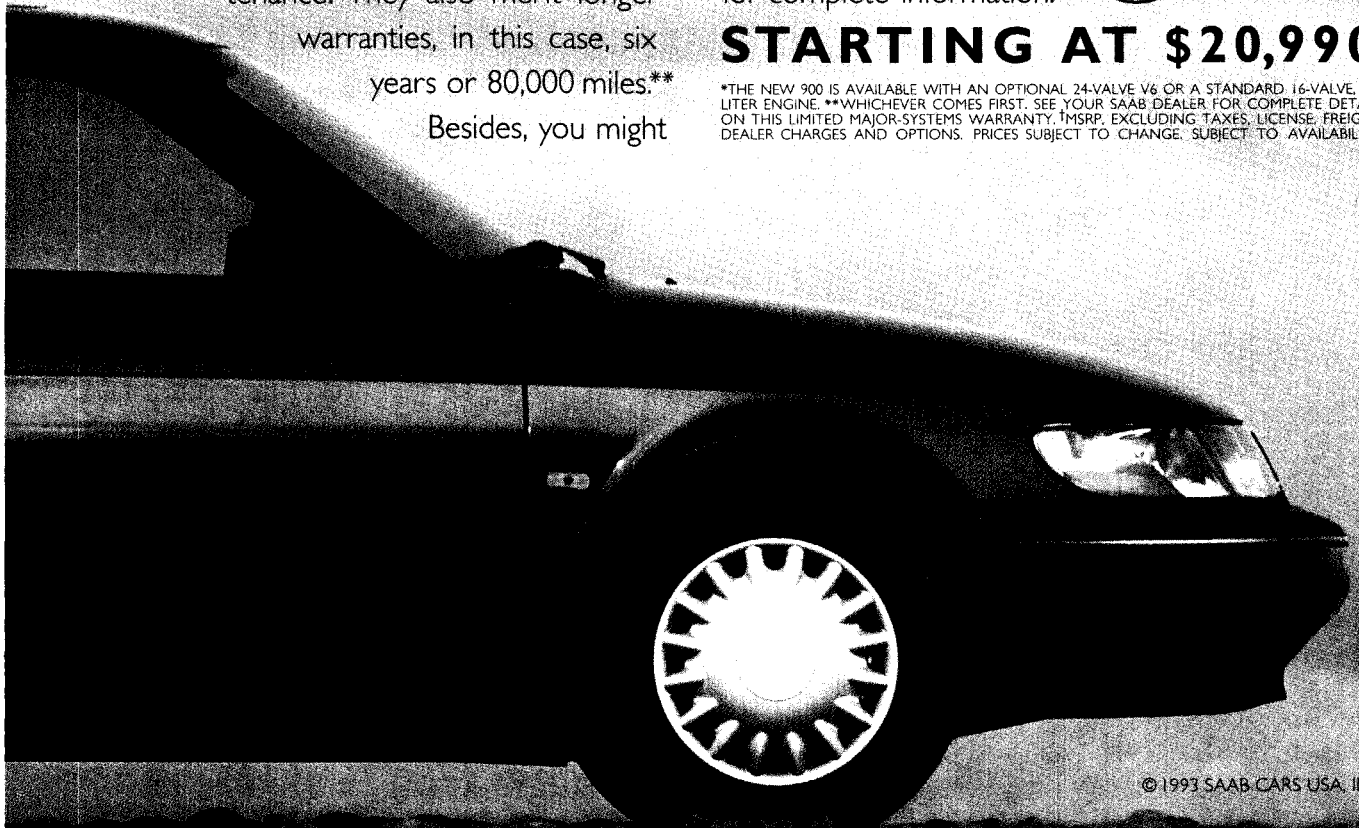
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# BIRTH OF THE SAAB 900.

Mention “the environment” or “diminishing natural resources” in foreign-policy circles and you meet a brick wall of skepticism or boredom. To conservatives especially, the very terms seem flaky. Public-policy foundations have contributed to the lack of interest, by funding narrowly focused environmental studies replete with technical jargon which foreign-affairs experts just let pile up on their desks.

It is time to understand “the environment” for what it is: *the* national-security issue of the early twenty-first century. The political and strategic impact of surging populations, spreading disease, deforestation and soil erosion, water de-

tween Hungary and Slovakia over the damming of the Danube, a classic case of how environmental disputes fuse with ethnic and historical ones. The political scientist and erstwhile Clinton adviser Michael Mandelbaum has said, “We have a foreign policy today in the shape of a doughnut—lots of peripheral interests but nothing at the center.” The environment, I will argue, is part of a terrifying array of problems that will define a new threat to our security, filling the hole in Mandelbaum’s doughnut and allowing a post-Cold War foreign policy to emerge inexorably by need rather than by design.



pletion, air pollution, and, possibly, rising sea levels in critical, overcrowded regions like the Nile Delta and Bangladesh—developments that will prompt mass migrations and, in turn, incite group conflicts—will be the core foreign-policy challenge from which most others will ultimately emanate, arousing the public and uniting assorted interests left over from the Cold War. In the twenty-first century water will be in dangerously short supply in such diverse locales as Saudi Arabia, Central Asia, and the southwestern United States. A war could erupt between Egypt and Ethiopia over Nile River water. Even in Europe tensions have arisen be-

**O**UR Cold War foreign policy truly began with George F. Kennan’s famous article, signed “X,” published in *Foreign Affairs* in July of 1947, in which Kennan argued for a “firm and vigilant containment” of a Soviet Union that was imperially, rather than ideologically, motivated. It may be that our post-Cold War foreign policy will one day be seen to have had its beginnings in an even bolder and more detailed piece of written analysis: one that appeared in the journal *International Security*. The article, published in the fall of 1991 by Thomas Fraser Homer-Dixon, who is the head of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at the University of

Toronto, was titled "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict." Homer-Dixon has, more successfully than other analysts, integrated two hitherto separate fields—military-conflict studies and the study of the physical environment.

In Homer-Dixon's view, future wars and civil violence will often arise from scarcities of resources such as water, cropland, forests, and fish. Just as there will be environmentally driven wars and refugee flows, there will be environmentally induced praetorian regimes—or, as he puts it, "hard regimes." Countries with the highest probability of acquiring hard regimes, according to Homer-Dixon, are those that are threatened by a declining resource base yet also have "a history of state [read 'military'] strength." Candidates include Indonesia, Brazil, and, of course, Nigeria. Though each of these nations has exhibited democratizing tendencies of late, Homer-Dixon argues that such tendencies are likely to be superficial "epiphenomena" having nothing to do with long-term processes that include soaring populations and shrinking raw materials. Democracy is problematic; scarcity is more certain.

Indeed, the Saddam Husseins of the future will have more, not fewer, opportunities. In addition to engendering tribal strife, scarcer resources will place a great strain on many peoples who never had much of a democratic or institutional tradition to begin with. Over the next fifty years the earth's population will soar from 5.5 billion to more than nine billion. Though optimists have hopes for new resource technologies and free-market development in the global village, they fail to note that, as the National Academy of Sciences has pointed out, 95 percent of the population increase will be in the poorest regions of the world, where governments now—just look at Africa—show little ability to function, let alone to implement even marginal improvements. Homer-Dixon writes, ominously, "Neo-Malthusians may underestimate human adaptability in *today's* environmental-social system, but as time passes their analysis may become ever more compelling."

While a minority of the human population will be, as Francis Fukuyama would put it, sufficiently sheltered so as to enter a "post-historical" realm, living in cities and suburbs in which the environment has been mastered and ethnic animosities have been quelled by bourgeois prosperity, an increasingly large number of people will be stuck in history, living in shantytowns where attempts to rise above poverty, cultural dysfunction, and ethnic strife will be doomed by a lack of water to drink, soil to till, and space to survive in. In the developing world environmental stress will present people

with a choice that is increasingly among totalitarianism (as in Iraq), fascist-tending mini-states (as in Serb-held Bosnia), and road-warrior cultures (as in Somalia). Homer-

Dixon concludes that "as environmental degradation proceeds, the size of the potential social disruption will increase."

Tad Homer-Dixon is an unlikely Jeremiah. Today a boyish thirty-seven, he grew up amid the sylvan majesty of Vancouver Island, attending private day schools. His speech is calm, perfectly even, and crisply enunciated. There is nothing in his background or manner that would indicate a bent toward pessimism. A Canadian Anglican who spends his summers canoeing on the lakes of northern Ontario, and who talks about the benign mountains, black bears, and Douglas firs of his youth, he is the opposite of the intellectually

MICHAEL ENDE-FOCUS/MATRIX; OPPOSITE: DONNA DECESARE/IMPACT VISUALS



GREG GIRARD/CONTACT



**Left: El Playón, El Salvador, repository of garbage and death-squad victims. Right: Rio de Janeiro (top) and Shanghai, crowded and still growing.**

severe neoconservative, the kind at home with conflict scenarios. Nor is he an environmentalist who opposes development. "My father was a logger who thought about ecologically safe forestry before others," he says. "He logged, planted, logged, and planted. He got out of the business just as the issue was being polarized by environmentalists. They hate changed ecosystems. But human beings, just by carrying seeds around, change the natural world." As an only child whose playground was a virtually untouched wilderness and seacoast, Homer-Dixon has a familiarity with the natural world that permits him to see a reality that most pol-



icy analysts—children of suburbia and city streets—are blind to.

“We need to bring nature back in,” he argues. “We have to stop separating politics from the physical world—the climate, public health, and the environment.” Quoting Daniel Deudney, another pioneering expert on the security aspects of the environment, Homer-Dixon says that “for too long we’ve been prisoners of ‘social-social’ theory, which assumes there are only social causes for social and political changes, rather than natural causes, too. This social-social mentality emerged with the Industrial Revolution, which separated us from nature. But nature is coming back with a vengeance, tied to population growth. It will have incredible security implications.

“Think of a stretch limo in the potholed streets of New York City, where homeless beggars live. Inside the limo are the air-conditioned post-industrial regions of North America, Europe, the emerging Pacific Rim, and a few other isolated places, with their trade summitry and computer-information highways. Outside is the rest of mankind, going in a completely different direction.”

**W**E are entering a bifurcated world. Part of the globe is inhabited by Hegel’s and Fukuyama’s Last Man, healthy, well fed, and pampered by technology. The other, larger, part is inhabited by Hobbes’s First Man, condemned to a life that is “poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” Although both parts will be threatened by environmental stress, the Last Man will be able to master it; the First Man will not.

The Last Man will adjust to the loss of underground water tables in the western United States. He will build dikes to save Cape Hatteras and the Chesapeake beaches from rising sea levels, even as the Maldives Islands, off the coast of India, sink into oblivion, and the shorelines of Egypt, Bangladesh, and Southeast Asia recede, driving tens of millions of people inland where there is no room for them, and thus sharpening ethnic divisions.

Homer-Dixon points to a world map of soil degradation in his Toronto office. “The darker the map color, the worse the degradation,” he explains. The West African coast, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, China, and Central America have the darkest shades, signifying all manner of degradation, related to winds, chemicals, and water problems. “The worst degradation is generally where the population is highest. The population is generally highest where the soil is the best. So we’re degrading earth’s best soil.”

China, in Homer-Dixon’s view, is the quintessential example of environmental degradation. Its current economic “success” masks deeper problems. “China’s fourteen percent growth rate does not mean it’s going to be a world power. It means that coastal China, where the economic growth is taking place, is joining the rest of the Pacific Rim. The disparity with inland China is intensifying.” Referring to the envi-

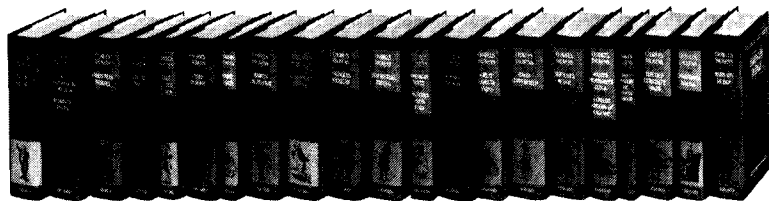
ronmental research of his colleague, the Czech-born ecologist Vaclav Smil, Homer-Dixon explains how the per capita availability of arable land in interior China has rapidly declined at the same time that the quality of that land has been destroyed by deforestation, loss of topsoil, and salinization. He mentions the loss and contamination of water supplies, the exhaustion of wells, the plugging of irrigation systems and reservoirs with eroded silt, and a population of 1.54 billion by the year 2025: it is a misconception that China has gotten its population under control. Large-scale population movements are under way, from inland China to coastal China and from villages to cities, leading to a crime surge like the one in Africa and to growing regional disparities and conflicts in a land with a strong tradition of warlordism and a weak tradition of central government—again as in Africa. “We will probably see the center challenged and fractured, and China will not remain the same on the map,” Homer-Dixon says.

Environmental scarcity will inflame existing hatreds and affect power relationships, at which we now look.

## SKINHEAD COSSACKS, JUJU WARRIORS

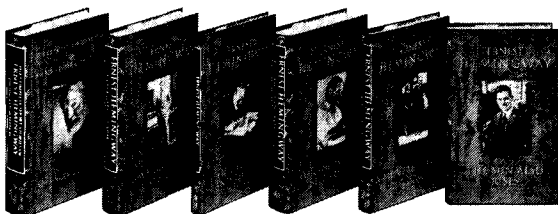
**I**N the summer, 1993, issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Samuel P. Huntington, of Harvard’s Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, published a thought-provoking article called “The Clash of Civilizations?” The world, he argues, has been moving during the course of this century from nation-state conflict to ideological conflict to, finally, cultural conflict. I would add that as refugee flows increase and as peasants continue migrating to cities around the world—turning them into sprawling villages—national borders will mean less, even as more power will fall into the hands of less educated, less sophisticated groups. In the eyes of these uneducated but newly empowered millions, the real borders are the most tangible and intractable ones: those of culture and tribe. Huntington writes, “First, differences among civilizations are not only real; they are basic,” involving, among other things, history, language, and religion. “Second . . . interactions between peoples of different civilizations are increasing; these increasing interactions intensify civilization consciousness.” Economic modernization is not necessarily a panacea, since it fuels individual and group ambitions while weakening traditional loyalties to the state. It is worth noting, for example, that it is precisely the wealthiest and fastest-developing city in India, Bombay, that has seen the worst intercommunal violence between Hindus and Muslims. Consider that Indian cities, like African and Chinese ones, are ecological time bombs—Delhi and Calcutta, and also Beijing, suffer the worst air quality of any cities in the world—and it is apparent how surging populations, environmental degradation, and ethnic conflict are deeply related.

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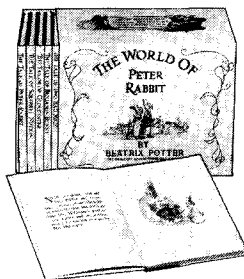


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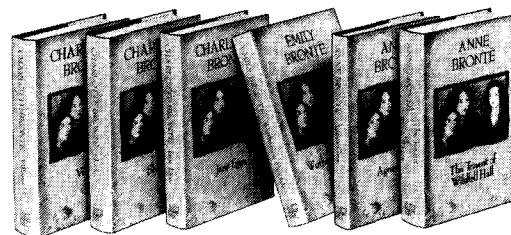
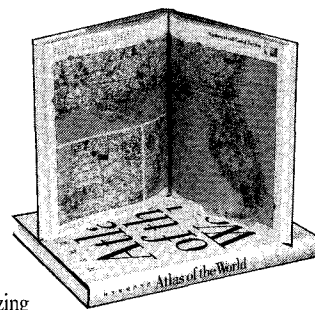


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Huntington points to interlocking conflicts among Hindu, Muslim, Slavic Orthodox, Western, Japanese, Confucian, Latin American, and possibly African civilizations: for instance, Hindus clashing with Muslims in India, Turkic Muslims clashing with Slavic Orthodox Russians in Central Asian cities, the West clashing with Asia. (Even in the United States, African-Americans find themselves besieged by an influx of competing Latinos.) Whatever the laws, refugees find a way to crash official borders, bringing their passions with them, meaning that Europe and the United States will be weakened by cultural disputes.

Because Huntington's brush is broad, his specifics are vulnerable to attack. In a rebuttal of Huntington's argument the Johns Hopkins professor Fouad Ajami, a Lebanese-born Shi'ite who certainly knows the world beyond suburbia, writes in the September-October, 1993, issue of *Foreign Affairs*,

The world of Islam divides and subdivides. The battle lines in the Caucasus . . . are not coextensive with civilizational fault lines. The lines follow the interests of states. Where Huntington sees a civilizational duel between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Iranian state has cast religious zeal . . . to the wind . . . in that battle the Iranians have tilted toward Christian Armenia.

True, Huntington's hypothesized war between Islam and Orthodox Christianity is not borne out by the alliance network in the Caucasus. But that is only because he has misidentified *which* cultural war is occurring there. A recent visit to Azerbaijan made clear to me that Azeri Turks, the world's most secular Shi'ite Muslims, see their cultural identity in terms not of religion but of their Turkic race. The Armenians, likewise, fight the Azeris not because the latter are Muslims but because they are Turks, related to the same Turks who massacred Armenians in 1915. Turkic culture (secular and based on languages employing a Latin script) is battling Iranian culture (religiously militant as defined by Tehran, and wedded to an Arabic script) across the whole swath of Central Asia and the Caucasus. The Armenians are, therefore, natural allies of their fellow Indo-Europeans the Iranians.

Huntington is correct that the Caucasus is a flashpoint of cultural and racial war. But, as Ajami observes, Huntington's plate tectonics are too simple. Two months of recent travel throughout Turkey revealed to me that although the Turks are developing a deep distrust, bordering on hatred, of fellow-Muslim Iran, they are also, especially in the shantytowns that are coming to dominate Turkish public opinion, revising their group identity, increasingly seeing themselves as Muslims being deserted by a West that does little to help besieged Muslims in Bosnia and that attacks Turkish Muslims in the streets of Germany.

***In Bosnia, the former Yugoslavia, compatriots add one more victim of civil war to a mass grave***

In other words, the Balkans, a powder keg for nation-state war at the beginning of the twentieth century, could

CHRISTOPHER MORRIS/BLACK STAR



be a powder keg for cultural war at the turn of the twenty-first: between Orthodox Christianity (represented by the Serbs and a classic Byzantine configuration of Greeks, Russians, and Romanians) and the House of Islam. Yet in the Caucasus that House of Islam is falling into a clash between Turkic and Iranian civilizations. Ajami asserts that this very subdivision, not to mention all the divisions within the Arab world, indicates that the West, including the United States, is not threatened by Huntington's scenario. As the Gulf War demonstrated, the West has proved capable of playing one part of the House of Islam against another.

True. However, whether he is aware of it or not, Ajami is describing a world even more dangerous than the one Huntington envisions, especially when one takes into account Homer-Dixon's research on environmental scarcity. Outside the stretch limo would be a rundown, crowded planet of skinhead Cossacks and *juju* warriors, influenced by the worst refuse of Western pop culture and ancient tribal hatreds, and battling over scraps of overused earth in guerrilla





conflicts that ripple across continents and intersect in no discernible pattern—meaning there's no easy-to-define threat. Kennan's world of one adversary seems as distant as the world of Herodotus.

Most people believe that the political earth since 1989 has undergone immense change. But it is minor compared with what is yet to come. The breaking apart and remaking of the atlas is only now beginning. The crack-up of the Soviet empire and the coming end of Arab-Israeli military confrontation are merely prologues to the really big changes that lie ahead. Michael Vlahos, a long-range thinker for the U.S. Navy, warns, "We are not in charge of the environment and the world is not following us. It is going in many directions. Do not assume that democratic capitalism is the last word in human social evolution."

Before addressing the questions of maps and of warfare, I want to take a closer look at the interaction of religion, culture, demographic shifts, and the distribution of natural resources in a specific area of the world: the Middle East.

**B**UILT on steep, muddy hills, the shantytowns of Ankara, the Turkish capital, exude visual drama. Altindag, or "Golden Mountain," is a pyramid of dreams, fashioned from cinder blocks and corrugated iron, rising as though each shack were built on top of another, all reaching awkwardly and painfully toward heaven—the heaven of wealthier Turks who live elsewhere in the city. Nowhere else on the planet have I found such a poignant architectural symbol of man's striving, with gaps in house walls plugged with rusted cans, and leeks and onions growing on verandas assembled from planks of rotting wood. For reasons that I will explain, the Turkish shantytown is a psychological universe away from the African one.

To see the twenty-first century truly, one's eyes must learn a different set of aesthetics. One must reject the overly stylized images of travel magazines, with their inviting photographs of exotic villages and glamorous downtowns. There are far too many millions whose dreams are more vulgar, more real—whose raw energies and desires will overwhelm the visions of the elites, remaking the future into something frighteningly new. But in Turkey I learned that shantytowns are not all bad.

Slum quarters in Abidjan terrify and repel the outsider. In Turkey it is the opposite. The closer I got to Golden Mountain the better it looked, and the safer I felt. I had \$1,500 worth of Turkish lira in one pocket and \$1,000 in traveler's checks in the other, yet I felt no fear. Golden Mountain was a real neighborhood. The inside of one house told the story: The architectural bedlam of cinder block and sheet metal and cardboard walls was deceiving. Inside was a *home*—order, that is, bespeaking dignity. I saw a working refrigerator, a television, a wall cabinet with a few books and lots of family pictures, a few plants by a window, and a stove. Though the streets become rivers of mud when it rains, the floors inside this house were spotless.

Other houses were like this too. Schoolchildren ran along with briefcases strapped to their backs, trucks delivered cooking gas, a few men sat inside a café sipping tea. One man sipped beer. Alcohol is easy to obtain in Turkey, a secular state where 99 percent of the population is Muslim. Yet there is little problem of alcoholism. Crime against persons is infinitesimal. Poverty and illiteracy are watered-down versions of what obtains in Algeria and Egypt (to say nothing of West Africa), making it that much harder for religious extremists to gain a foothold.

My point in bringing up a rather wholesome, crime-free slum is this: its existence demonstrates how formidable is the fabric of which Turkish Muslim culture is made. A culture this strong has the potential to dominate the Middle East once again. Slums are litmus tests for innate cultural strengths and weaknesses. Those peoples whose cultures can harbor extensive slum life without decomposing will be, relatively speak-

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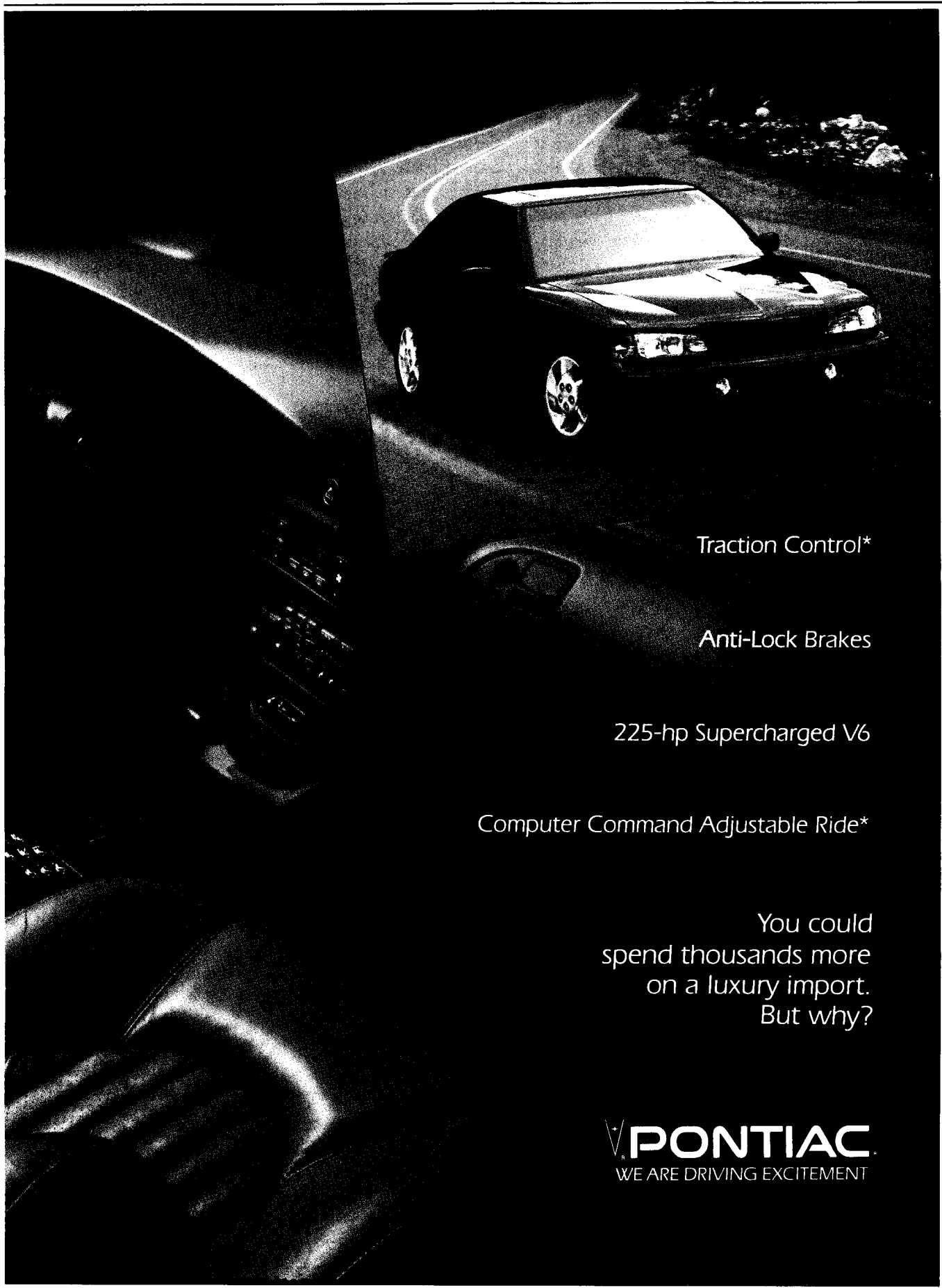
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ing, the future's winners. Those whose cultures cannot will be the future's victims. Slums—in the sociological sense—do not exist in Turkish cities. The mortar between people and family groups is stronger here than in Africa. Resurgent Islam and Turkic cultural identity have produced a civilization with natural muscle tone. Turks, history's perennial nomads, take disruption in stride.

The future of the Middle East is quietly being written inside the heads of Golden Mountain's inhabitants. Think of an Ottoman military encampment on the eve of the destruction of Greek Constantinople in 1453. That is Golden Mountain. "We brought the village here. But in the village we worked harder—in the field, all day. So we couldn't fast during [the holy month of] Ramadan. Here we fast. Here we are more religious." Aishe Tanrikulu, along with half a dozen other women, was stuffing rice into vine leaves from a crude plastic bowl. She asked me to join her under the shade of a piece of sheet metal. Each

of these women had her hair covered by a kerchief. In the city they were encountering television for the first time. "We are traditional, religious people. The programs offend us," Aishe said. Another woman complained about the schools. Though her children had educational options unavailable in the village, they had to compete with wealthier, secular Turks. "The kids from rich families with connections—they get all the places." More opportunities, more tensions, in other words.

My guidebook to Golden Mountain was an untypical one: *Tales From the Garbage Hills*, a brutally realistic novel by a Turkish writer, Latife Tekin, about life in the shantytowns, which in Turkey are called *gecekondus* ("built in a night"). "He listened to the earth and wept unceasingly for water, for work and for the cure of the illnesses spread by the garbage and the factory waste," Tekin writes. In the most revealing passage of *Tales From the Garbage Hills* the squatters are told "about a certain 'Ottoman Empire' . . . that where they now lived there had once been an empire of this name." This history "confounded" the squatters. It was the first they had

heard of it. Though one of them knew "that his grandfather and his dog died fighting the Greeks," nationalism and an encompassing sense of Turkish history are the province of the Turkish middle and upper classes, and of foreigners like me who feel required to have a notion of "Turkey."

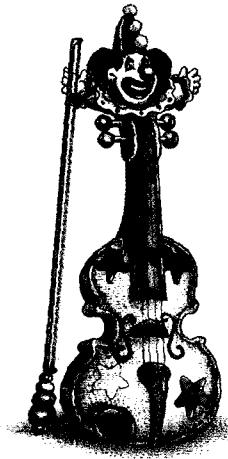
But what did the Golden Mountain squatters know about the armies of Turkish migrants that had come before their own—namely, Seljuks and Ottomans? For these recently urbanized peasants, and their counterparts in Africa, the Arab world, India, and so many other places, the world is new, to adapt V. S. Naipaul's phrase. As Naipaul wrote of urban refugees in *India: A Wounded Civilization*, "They saw themselves at the beginning of things: unaccommodated men making a claim on their land for the first time, and out of chaos evolving their own philosophy of community and self-help. For them the past was dead; they had left it behind in the villages."

Everywhere in the developing world at the turn of the twenty-first century these new men and women, rushing into the cities, are remaking civilizations and redefining their identities in terms of religion and tribal ethnicity which do not coincide with the borders of existing states.

**I**N Turkey several things are happening at once. In 1980, 44 percent of Turks lived in cities; in 1990 it was 61 percent. By the year 2000 the figure is expected to be 67 percent. Villages are emptying out as concentric rings of *gecekondus* developments grow around Turkish cities. This is the real political and demographic revolution in Turkey and elsewhere, and foreign correspondents usually don't write about it.

Whereas rural poverty is age-old and almost a "normal" part of the social fabric, urban poverty is socially destabilizing. As Iran has shown, Islamic extremism is the psychological defense mechanism of many urbanized peasants threatened with the loss of traditions in pseudo-modern cities where their values are under attack, where basic services like water and electricity are unavailable, and where they are assaulted by a physically unhealthy environment. The American ethnologist and orientalist Carleton Stevens Coon wrote in 1951 that Islam "has made possible the optimum survival and happiness of millions of human beings in an increasingly impoverished environment over a fourteen-hundred-year period." Beyond its stark, clearly articulated message, Islam's very militancy makes it attractive to the downtrodden. It is the one religion that is prepared to *fight*. A political era driven by environmental stress, increased cultural sensitivity, unregulated urbanization, and refugee migrations is an era divinely created for the spread and intensification of Islam, already the world's fastest-growing religion. (Though Islam is spreading in West Africa, it is being hobbled by syncretization with animism: this makes new converts less apt to become anti-Western extremists, but it also makes for a weakened version of the faith, which is less effective as an antidote to crime.)

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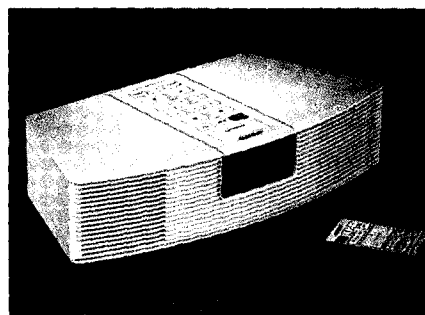
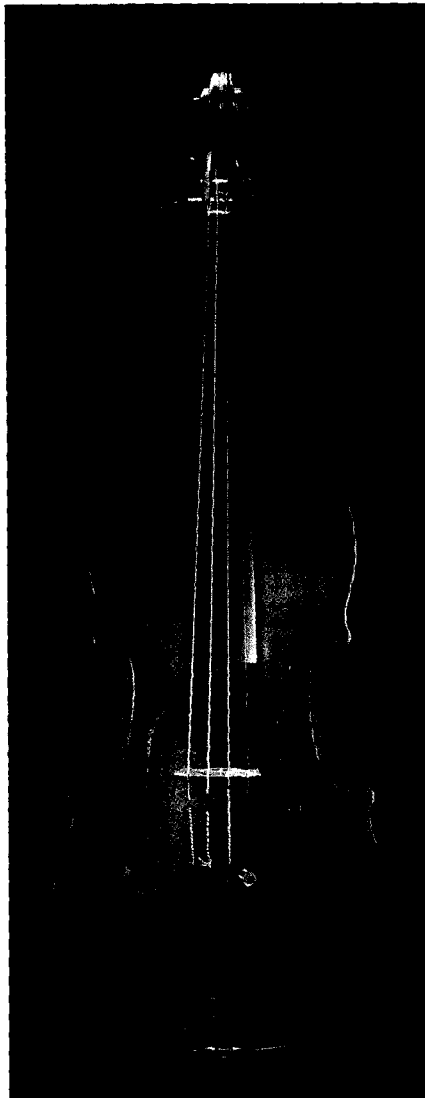
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In Turkey, however, Islam is painfully and awkwardly forging a consensus with modernization, a trend that is less apparent in the Arab and Persian worlds (and virtually invisible in Africa). In Iran the oil boom—because it put development and urbanization on a fast track, making the culture shock more intense—fueled the 1978 Islamic Revolution. But Turkey, unlike Iran and the Arab world, has little oil. Therefore its development and urbanization have been more gradual. Islamists have been integrated into the parliamentary system for decades. The tensions I noticed in Golden Mountain are natural, creative ones: the kind immigrants face the world



THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: AXEL KOESTER/IMPACT VISUALS



over. While the world has focused on religious perversity in Algeria, a nation rich in natural gas, and in Egypt, parts of whose capital city, Cairo, evince worse crowding than I have seen even in Calcutta, Turkey has been living through the Muslim equivalent of the Protestant Reformation.

Resource distribution is strengthening Turks in another way vis-à-vis Arabs and Persians. Turks may have little oil, but their Anatolian heartland has lots of water—the most important fluid of the twenty-first century. Turkey's Southeast Anatolia Project, involving twenty-two major dams and irrigation systems, is impounding the waters of the Tigris and

Euphrates rivers. Much of the water that Arabs and perhaps Israelis will need to drink in the future is controlled by Turks. The project's centerpiece is the mile-wide, sixteen-story Atatürk Dam, upon which are emblazoned the words of modern Turkey's founder: "*Ne Mutlu Turkum Diyene*" ("Lucky is the one who is a Turk").

Unlike Egypt's Aswan High Dam, on the Nile, and Syria's Revolution Dam, on the Euphrates, both of which were built largely by Russians, the Atatürk Dam is a predominantly Turkish affair, with Turkish engineers and companies in charge. On a recent visit my eyes took in the immaculate offices and their gardens, the high-voltage electric grids and phone switching stations, the dizzying sweep of giant humming transformers, the poured-concrete spillways, and the prim unfolding suburbia, complete with schools, for dam employees. The emerging power of the Turks was palpable.

Erduhan Bayindir, the site manager at the dam, told me that "while oil can be shipped abroad to enrich only elites, water has to be spread more evenly within the society. . . . It is true, we can stop the flow of water into Syria and Iraq for up to eight months without the same water overflowing our dams, in order to regulate their political behavior."

Power is certainly moving north in the Middle East, from the oil fields of Dhahran, on the Persian Gulf, to the water plain of Harran, in southern Anatolia—near the site of the Atatürk Dam. But will the nation-state of Turkey, as presently constituted, be the inheritor of this wealth?

I very much doubt it.

## THE LIES OF MAPMAKERS

**W**HEREAS West Africa represents the least stable part of political reality outside Homer-Dixon's stretch limo, Turkey, an organic outgrowth of two Turkish empires that ruled Anatolia for 850 years, has been among the most stable. Turkey's borders were established not by colonial powers but in a war of independence, in the early 1920s. Kemal Atatürk provided Turkey with a secular nation-building myth that most Arab and African states, burdened by artificially drawn borders, lack. That lack will leave many Arab states defenseless against a wave of Islam that will eat away at their legitimacy and frontiers in coming years. Yet even as regards Turkey, maps deceive.

It is not only African shantytowns that don't appear on urban maps. Many shantytowns in Turkey and elsewhere are also missing—as are the considerable territories controlled by guerrilla armies and urban mafias. Traveling with Eritrean guerrillas in what, according to the map, was northern Ethiopia, traveling in "northern Iraq" with Kurdish guerrillas, and staying in a hotel in the Caucasus controlled

*Opposite page: Kurds in Turkey defy the government by kindling ritual fires. Above: a Kurdish guerrilla fighter; Kurdish children with spent shells.*



by a local mafia—to say nothing of my experiences in West Africa—led me to develop a healthy skepticism toward maps, which, I began to realize, create a conceptual barrier that prevents us from comprehending the political crack-up just beginning to occur worldwide.

Consider the map of the world, with its 190 or so countries, each signified by a bold and uniform color: this map, with which all of us have grown up, is generally an invention of modernism, specifically of European colonialism. Modernism, in the sense of which I speak, began with the rise of nation-states in Europe and was confirmed by the death of feudalism

of creating facts by ordering the way we look at the world.

In his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Benedict Anderson, of Cornell University, demonstrates that the map enabled colonialists to think about their holdings in terms of a “totalizing classificatory grid. . . . It was bounded, determinate, and therefore—in principle—countable.” To the colonialist, country maps were the equivalent of an accountant’s ledger books. Maps, Anderson explains, “shaped the grammar” that would make possible such questionable concepts as Iraq, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. The state, recall, is a



at the end of the Thirty Years’ War—an event that was interposed between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, which together gave birth to modern science. People were suddenly flush with an enthusiasm to categorize, to define. The map, based on scientific techniques of measurement, offered a way to classify new national organisms, making a jigsaw puzzle of neat pieces without transition zones between them. “Frontier” is itself a modern concept that didn’t exist in the feudal mind. And as European nations carved out far-flung domains at the same time that print technology was making the reproduction of maps cheaper, cartography came into its own as a way

purely Western notion, one that until the twentieth century applied to countries covering only three percent of the earth’s land area. Nor is the evidence compelling that the state, as a governing ideal, can be successfully transported to areas outside the industrialized world. Even the United States of America, in the words of one of our best living poets, Gary Snyder, consists of “arbitrary and inaccurate impositions on what is really here.”

Yet this inflexible, artificial reality staggers on, not only in the United Nations but in various geographic and travel publications (themselves by-products of an age of elite touring

which colonialism made possible) that still report on and photograph the world according to "country." Newspapers, this magazine, and this writer are not innocent of the tendency.

According to the map, the great hydropower complex emblemized by the Atatürk Dam is situated in Turkey. Forget the map. This southeastern region of Turkey is populated almost completely by Kurds. About half of the world's 20 million Kurds live in "Turkey." The Kurds are predominant in an ellipse of territory that overlaps not only with Turkey but also with Iraq, Iran, Syria, and the former Soviet Union. The Western-enforced Kurdish enclave in northern Iraq, a consequence of the 1991 Gulf War, has already exposed the fictitious nature of that supposed nation-state.

On a recent visit to the Turkish-Iranian border, it occurred to me what a risky idea the nation-state is. Here I was on the legal fault line between two clashing civilizations, Turkic and Iranian. Yet the reality was more subtle: as in West Africa, the border was porous and smuggling abounded, but here the people doing the smuggling, on both sides of the border, were

Kurds. In such a moonscape, over which peoples have migrated and settled in patterns that obliterate borders, the end of the Cold War will bring on a cruel process of natural selection among existing states. No longer will these states be so firmly propped up by the West or the Soviet Union. Because the Kurds overlap with nearly everybody in the Middle East, on account of their being cheated out of a state in the post-First World War peace treaties, they are emerging, in effect, as *the* natural selector—the ultimate reality check. They have destabilized Iraq and may continue to disrupt states that do not offer them adequate breathing space, while strengthening states that do.

Because the Turks, owing to their water resources, their growing economy, and the social cohesion evinced by the most crime-free slums I have encountered, are on the verge of big-power status, and because the 10 million Kurds within Turkey threaten that status, the outcome of the Turkish-Kurdish dispute will

be more critical to the future of the Middle East than the eventual outcome of the recent Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

**A**MERICA'S fascination with the Israeli-Palestinian issue, coupled with its lack of interest in the Turkish-Kurdish one, is a function of its own domestic and ethnic obsessions, not of the cartographic reality that is about to transform the Middle East. The diplomatic process involving Israelis and Palestinians will, I believe, have little effect on the early- and mid-twenty-first-century map of the region. Israel, with a 6.6 percent economic growth rate based increasingly on high-tech exports, is about to enter Homer-Dixon's stretch limo, fortified by a well-defined political community that is an organic outgrowth of history and ethnicity. Like prosperous and peaceful Japan on the one hand, and war-torn and poverty-wracked Armenia on the other, Israel is a classic national-ethnic organism. Much of the Arab world, however, will undergo alteration, as Islam spreads across artificial frontiers, fueled by mass migrations into the cities and a soaring birth rate of more than 3.2 percent. Seventy percent of the Arab population has been born since 1970—youths with little historical memory of anticolonial independence struggles, post-colonial attempts at nation-building, or any of the Arab-Israeli wars. The most distant recollection of these youths will be the West's humiliation of colonially invented Iraq in 1991. Today seventeen out of twenty-two Arab states have a declining gross national product; in the next twenty years, at current growth rates, the population of many Arab countries will double. These states, like most African ones, will be ungovernable through conventional secular ideologies. The Middle East analyst Christine M. Helms explains,

Declaring Arab nationalism "bankrupt," the political "disinherited" are not rationalizing the failure of Arabism . . . or reformulating it. Alternative solutions are not contemplated. They have simply opted for the political paradigm at the other end of the political spectrum with which they are familiar—Islam.

Like the borders of West Africa, the colonial borders of Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Algeria, and other Arab states are often contrary to cultural and political reality. As state control mechanisms wither in the face of environmental and demographic stress, "hard" Islamic city-states or shantytown-states are likely to emerge. The fiction that the impoverished city of Algiers, on the Mediterranean, controls Tamanrasset, deep in the Algerian Sahara, cannot obtain forever. Whatever the outcome of the peace process, Israel is destined to be a Jewish ethnic fortress amid a vast and volatile realm of Islam. In that realm, the violent youth culture of the Gaza shantytowns may be indicative of the coming era.

The destiny of Turks and Kurds is far less certain, but far more relevant to the kind of map that will explain our future world. The Kurds suggest a geographic reality that cannot be shown in two-dimensional space. The issue in Turkey is not simply a matter of giving autonomy or even independence to

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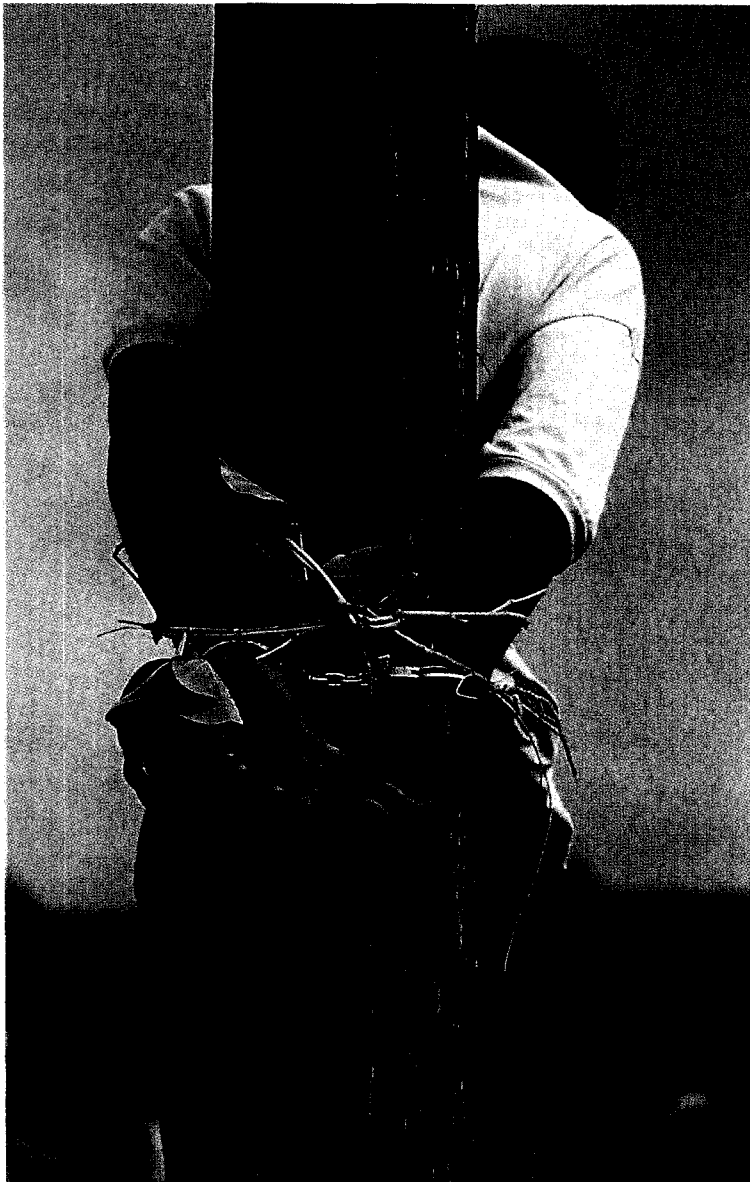
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PATRICK ROBERT/SYGMA

Kurds in the southeast. This isn't the Balkans or the Caucasus, where regions are merely subdividing into smaller units, Abkhazia breaking off from Georgia, and so on. Federalism is not the answer. Kurds are found everywhere in Turkey, including the shanty districts of Istanbul and Ankara. Turkey's problem is that its Anatolian land mass is the home of two cultures and languages, Turkish and Kurdish. Identity in Turkey, as in India, Africa, and elsewhere, is more complex and subtle than conventional cartography can display.

#### A NEW KIND OF WAR

**T**O appreciate fully the political and cartographic implications of postmodernism—an epoch of themeless juxtapositions, in which the classificatory grid of nation-states is going to be replaced by a jagged-glass pattern of city-states, shanty-states, nebulous and anarchic regionalisms—it is necessary to consider, finally, the whole question of war.

“Oh, what a relief to fight, to fight enemies who defend themselves, enemies who are awake!” André Malraux wrote in *Man's Fate*. I cannot think of a more suitable battle cry for many combatants in the early decades of the twenty-first century. The intense savagery of the fighting in such diverse cultural settings as Liberia, Bosnia, the Caucasus, and Sri Lanka—to say nothing of what obtains in American inner cities—indicates something very troubling that those of us inside the stretch limo, concerned with issues like middle-class entitlements and the future of interactive cable television, lack the stomach to contemplate. It is this: a large number of people on this planet, to whom the comfort and stability of a middle-class life is utterly unknown, find war and a barracks existence a step up rather than a step down.

“Just as it makes no sense to ask ‘why people eat’ or ‘what they sleep for,’” writes Martin van Creveld, a military historian at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in *The Transformation of War*, “so fighting in many ways is not a means but an end. Throughout history, for every person who has expressed his horror of war there is another who found in it the most marvelous of all the experiences that are vouchsafed to man, even to the point that he later spent a lifetime boring his descendants by recounting his exploits.” When I asked Pentagon officials about the nature of war in the twenty-first century, the answer I frequently got was “Read Van Creveld.” The top brass are enamored of this historian not because his writings justify their existence but, rather, the opposite: Van Creveld warns them that huge state military machines like the Pentagon's are dinosaurs about to go extinct, and that something far more terrible awaits us.

The degree to which Van Creveld's *Transformation of War* complements Homer-Dixon's work on the environment, Huntington's thoughts on cultural clash, my own realizations in traveling by foot, bus, and bush taxi in more than sixty countries, and America's sobering comeuppances in intractable-culture zones like Haiti and Somalia is startling. The book begins by demolishing the notion that men don't like to fight. “By compelling the senses to focus themselves on the here and now,” Van Creveld writes, war “can cause a man to take his leave of them.” As anybody who has had experience with Chetniks in Serbia, “technicals” in Somalia, Tontons Macoutes in Haiti, or soldiers in Sierra Leone can tell you, in places where the Western Enlightenment has not penetrated and where there has always been mass poverty, people find liberation in violence. In Afghanistan and elsewhere, I vicariously experienced this phenomenon: worrying about mines and ambushes frees you from worrying about mundane details of daily existence. If my own experience is too subjective, there is a wealth of data showing the sheer frequency of war, especially in the developing world since the Second World War. Physical aggression is a part

*In Liberia, summary justice meted out against a soldier (above) and suspected thieves (below right). Above right: a scene in Vukovar, the former Yugoslavia.*

of being human. Only when people attain a certain economic, educational, and cultural standard is this trait tranquilized. In light of the fact that 95 percent of the earth's population growth will be in the poorest areas of the globe, the question is not whether there will be war (there will be a lot of it) but what kind of war. And who will fight whom?

Debunking the great military strategist Carl von Clausewitz, Van Creveld, who may be the most original thinker on war since that early-nineteenth-century Prussian, writes, "Clausewitz's ideas . . . were wholly rooted in the fact that, ever since 1648, war had been waged overwhelmingly by states." But, as Van Creveld explains, the period of nation-states and, therefore, of state conflict is now ending, and with it the clear "threefold division into government, army, and people" which state-directed wars enforce. Thus, to see the future, the first step is to look back to the past immediately prior to the birth of modernism—the wars in medieval Europe which began during the Reformation and reached their culmination in the Thirty Years' War.

Van Creveld writes,

In all these struggles political, social, economic, and religious motives were hopelessly entangled. Since this was an age when armies consisted of mercenaries, all were also attended by swarms of military entrepreneurs. . . . Many of them paid little but lip service to the organizations for whom they had contracted to fight. Instead, they robbed the countryside on their own behalf. . . .

Given such conditions, any fine distinctions . . . between armies on the one hand and peoples on the other were bound to break down. Engulfed by war, civilians suffered terrible atrocities.

**B**ACK then, in other words, there was no "politics" as we have come to understand the term, just as there is less and less "politics" today in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Balkans, and the Caucasus, among other places.

Because, as Van Creveld notes, the radius of trust within tribal societies is narrowed to one's immediate family and guerrilla comrades, truces arranged with one Bosnian commander, say, may be broken immediately by another Bosnian commander. The plethora of short-lived ceasefires in the Balkans and the Caucasus constitute proof that we are no longer in a world where the old rules of state warfare apply. More evidence is provided by the destruction of medieval monuments in the Croatian port of Dubrovnik: when cultures, rather than states, fight, then cultural and religious monuments are weapons of war, making them fair game.

Also, war-making entities will no longer be restricted to a specific territory. Loose and shadowy organisms such as Islamic terrorist organizations suggest why borders will mean increasingly little and sedimentary layers of tribalistic identity and control will mean more. "From the vantage point of the present, there appears every prospect that religious . . . fanaticisms will play a larger role in the motivation of armed

conflict" in the West than at any time "for the last 300 years," Van Creveld writes. This is why analysts like Michael Vlahos are closely monitoring religious cults. Vlahos says, "An ideology that challenges us may not take familiar form, like the old Nazis or Commies. It may not even engage us initially in ways that fit old threat markings." Van Creveld concludes, "Armed conflict will be waged by men on earth, not robots in space. It will have more in common with the struggles of primitive tribes than with large-scale conventional war." While another military historian, John Keegan, in his new book *A History of Warfare*, draws a more benign portrait of primitive man, it is important to point out that what Van Creveld really means is *re-primitivized* man: warrior societies operating at a time of unprecedented resource scarcity and planetary overcrowding.

Van Creveld's pre-Westphalian vision of worldwide low-intensity conflict is not a superficial "back to the future" scenario. First of all, technology will be used toward primitive ends. In Liberia the guerrilla leader Prince Johnson didn't

CHRISTOPHER MORRIS/BLACK STAR



PATRICK ROBERT/SYGMA



just cut off the ears of President Samuel Doe before Doe was tortured to death in 1990—Johnson made a video of it, which has circulated throughout West Africa. In December of 1992, when plotters of a failed coup against the Strasser regime in Sierra Leone had their ears cut off at Freetown's Hamilton Beach prior to being killed, it was seen by many to be a copycat execution. Considering, as I've explained earlier, that the Strasser regime is not really a government and that Sierra Leone is not really a nation-state, listen closely to Van Creveld: "Once the legal monopoly of armed force, long claimed by the state, is wrested out of its hands, exist-

tinue to shrink, being gradually replaced by a booming private security business, as in West Africa, and by urban mafias, especially in the former communist world, who may be better equipped than municipal police forces to grant physical protection to local inhabitants.

Future wars will be those of communal survival, aggravated or, in many cases, caused by environmental scarcity. These wars will be subnational, meaning that it will be hard for states and local governments to protect their own citizens physically. This is how many states will ultimately die. As state power fades—and with it the state's ability to help



ing distinctions between war and crime will break down much as is already the case today in . . . Lebanon, Sri Lanka, El Salvador, Peru, or Colombia."

If crime and war become indistinguishable, then "national defense" may in the future be viewed as a local concept. As crime continues to grow in our cities and the ability of state governments and criminal-justice systems to protect their citizens diminishes, urban crime may, according to Van Creveld, "develop into low-intensity conflict by coalescing along racial, religious, social, and political lines." As small-scale violence multiplies at home and abroad, state armies will con-

weaker groups within society, not to mention other states—peoples and cultures around the world will be thrown back upon their own strengths and weaknesses, with fewer equalizing mechanisms to protect them. Whereas the distant future will probably see the emergence of a racially hybrid, globalized man, the coming decades will see us more aware of our differences than of our similarities. To the average person, political values will mean less, personal security more. The belief that we are all equal is liable to be replaced by the overriding obsession of the ancient Greek travelers: Why the differences between peoples?



## THE LAST MAP

**I**n *Geography and the Human Spirit*, Anne Buttimer, a professor at University College, Dublin, recalls the work of an early-nineteenth-century German geographer, Carl Ritter, whose work implied “a divine plan for humanity” based on regionalism and a constant, living flow of forms. The map of the future, to the extent that a map is even possible, will represent a perverse twisting of Ritter’s vision. Imagine cartography in three dimensions, as if in a hologram. In this hologram would be the overlapping sediments of group and other identities atop the merely two-dimensional color markings of city-states and the remaining nations, themselves confused in places by shadowy tentacles, hovering overhead, indicating the power of drug cartels, mafias, and private security agencies. Instead of borders, there would be moving “centers” of power, as in the Middle Ages. Many of these layers would be in motion. Replacing fixed and abrupt lines on a flat space would be a shifting pattern of buffer entities, like the Kurdish and Azeri buffer entities between Turkey and Iran, the Turkic Uighur buffer entity between Central Asia and Inner China (itself distinct from coastal China), and the Latino buffer entity replacing a precise U.S.-Mexican border. To this protean cartographic hologram one must add other factors, such as migrations of populations, explosions of birth rates, vectors of disease. Henceforward the map of the world will never be static. This future map—in a sense, the “Last Map”—will be an ever-mutating representation of chaos.

The Indian subcontinent offers examples of what is happening. For different reasons, both India and Pakistan are increasingly dysfunctional. The argument over democracy in these places is less and less relevant to the larger issue of governability. In India’s case the question arises, Is one unwieldy bureaucracy in New Delhi the best available mechanism for promoting the lives of 866 million people of diverse languages, religions, and ethnic groups? In 1950, when the Indian population was much less than half as large and nation-building idealism was still strong, the argument for democracy was more impressive than it is now. Given that in 2025 India’s population could be close to 1.5 billion, that much of its economy rests on a shrinking natural-resource base, including dramatically declining water levels, and that communal violence and urbanization are spiraling upward, it is difficult to imagine that the Indian state will survive the next century. India’s oft-trumpeted Green Revolution has been achieved by overworking its croplands and depleting its watershed. Norman Myers, a British development consultant, worries that Indians have “been feeding themselves today by borrowing against their children’s food sources.”

Pakistan’s problem is more basic still: like much of Africa,

***Arson and looting in Los Angeles after the acquittal of police officers in the Rodney King case***

the country makes no geographic or demographic sense. It was founded as a homeland for the Muslims of the subcon-

tinental, yet there are more subcontinental Muslims outside Pakistan than within it. Like Yugoslavia, Pakistan is a patchwork of ethnic groups, increasingly in violent conflict with one another. While the Western media gushes over the fact that the country has a woman Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, Karachi is becoming a subcontinental version of Lagos. In eight visits to Pakistan, I have never gotten a sense of a cohesive national identity. With as much as 65 percent of its land dependent on intensive irrigation, with wide-scale deforestation, and with a yearly population growth of 2.7 percent (which ensures that the amount of cultivated land per rural inhabitant will plummet), Pakistan is becoming a more and more desperate place. As irrigation in the Indus River basin intensifies to serve two growing populations, Muslim-Hindu strife over falling water tables may be unavoidable.

“India and Pakistan will probably fall apart,” Homer-Dixon predicts. “Their secular governments have less and less legitimacy as well as less management ability over people and resources.” Rather than one bold line dividing the subcontinent into two parts, the future will likely see a lot of thinner lines and smaller parts, with the ethnic entities of Pakhtunistan and Punjab gradually replacing Pakistan in the space between the Central Asian plateau and the heart of the subcontinent.

None of this even takes into account climatic change, which, if it occurs in the next century, will further erode the capacity of existing states to cope. India, for instance, receives 70 percent of its precipitation from the monsoon cycle, which planetary warming could disrupt.

Not only will the three-dimensional aspects of the Last Map be in constant motion, but its two-dimensional base may change too. The National Academy of Sciences reports that

as many as one billion people, or 20 per cent of the world’s population, live on lands likely to be inundated or dramatically changed by rising waters. . . . Low-lying countries in the developing world such as Egypt and Bangladesh, where rivers are large and the deltas extensive and densely populated, will be hardest hit. . . . Where the rivers are dammed, as in the case of the Nile, the effects . . . will be especially severe.

Egypt could be where climatic upheaval—to say nothing of the more immediate threat of increasing population—will incite religious upheaval in truly biblical fashion. Natural catastrophes, such as the October, 1992, Cairo earthquake, in which the government failed to deliver relief aid and slum residents were in many instances helped by their local mosques, can only strengthen the position of Islamic factions. In a statement about greenhouse warming which could refer to any of a variety of natural catastrophes, the environmental expert Jessica Tuchman Matthews warns that many of us underestimate the extent to which political systems, in affluent societies as well as in places like Egypt, “depend on the underpinning of natural systems.” She adds, “The fact that one can move with ease from Vermont to Miami has nothing to say about the consequences of Vermont acquiring Miami’s climate.”

Indeed, it is not clear that the United States will survive the next century in exactly its present form. Because America is a multi-ethnic society, the nation-state has always been more fragile here than it is in more homogeneous societies like Germany and Japan. James Kurth, in an article published in *The National Interest* in 1992, explains that whereas nation-state societies tend to be built around a mass-conscription army and a standardized public school system, “multicultural regimes” feature a high-tech, all-volunteer army (and, I would add, private schools that teach competing values), operating in a culture in which the international media and entertainment industry has more influence than the “national political class.” In other words, a nation-state is a place where everyone has been educated along similar lines, where people take their cue from national leaders, and where everyone (every male, at least) has gone through the crucible of military service, making patriotism a simpler issue. Writing about his immigrant family in turn-of-the-century Chicago, Saul Bellow states, “The country took us over. It was a country then, not a collection of ‘cultures.’”

During the Second World War and the decade following it, the United States reached its apogee as a classic nation-state. During the 1960s, as is now clear, America began a slow but unmistakable process of transformation. The signs hardly need belaboring: racial polarity, educational dysfunction, social fragmentation of many and various kinds. William Irwin Thompson, in *Passages About Earth: An Exploration of the New Planetary Culture*, writes, “The educational system that had worked on the Jews or the Irish could no longer work on the blacks; and when Jewish teachers in New York tried to take black children away from their parents exactly in the way they had been taken from theirs, they were shocked to encounter a violent affirmation of negritude.”

Issues like West Africa could yet emerge as a new kind of foreign-policy issue, further eroding America’s domestic peace. The spectacle of several West African nations collapsing at once could reinforce the worst racial stereotypes here at home. That is another reason why Africa matters. We must not kid ourselves: the sensitivity factor is higher than ever. The Washington, D.C., public school system is already experimenting with an Afrocentric curriculum. Summits between African leaders and prominent African-Americans are becoming frequent, as are Pollyanna-ish prognostications about multiparty elections in Africa that do not factor in crime, surging birth rates, and resource depletion. The Congressional Black Caucus was among those urging U.S. involvement in Somalia and in Haiti. At the *Los Angeles Times* minority staffers have protested against, among other things, what they allege to be the racist tone of the newspaper’s Africa coverage, allegations that the editor of the “World Report” section, Dan Fisher, denies, saying essentially that Africa should be viewed through the same rigorous analytical lens as other parts of the world.

Africa may be marginal in terms of conventional late-twentieth-century conceptions of strategy, but in an age of

cultural and racial clash, when national defense is increasingly local, Africa’s distress will exert a destabilizing influence on the United States.

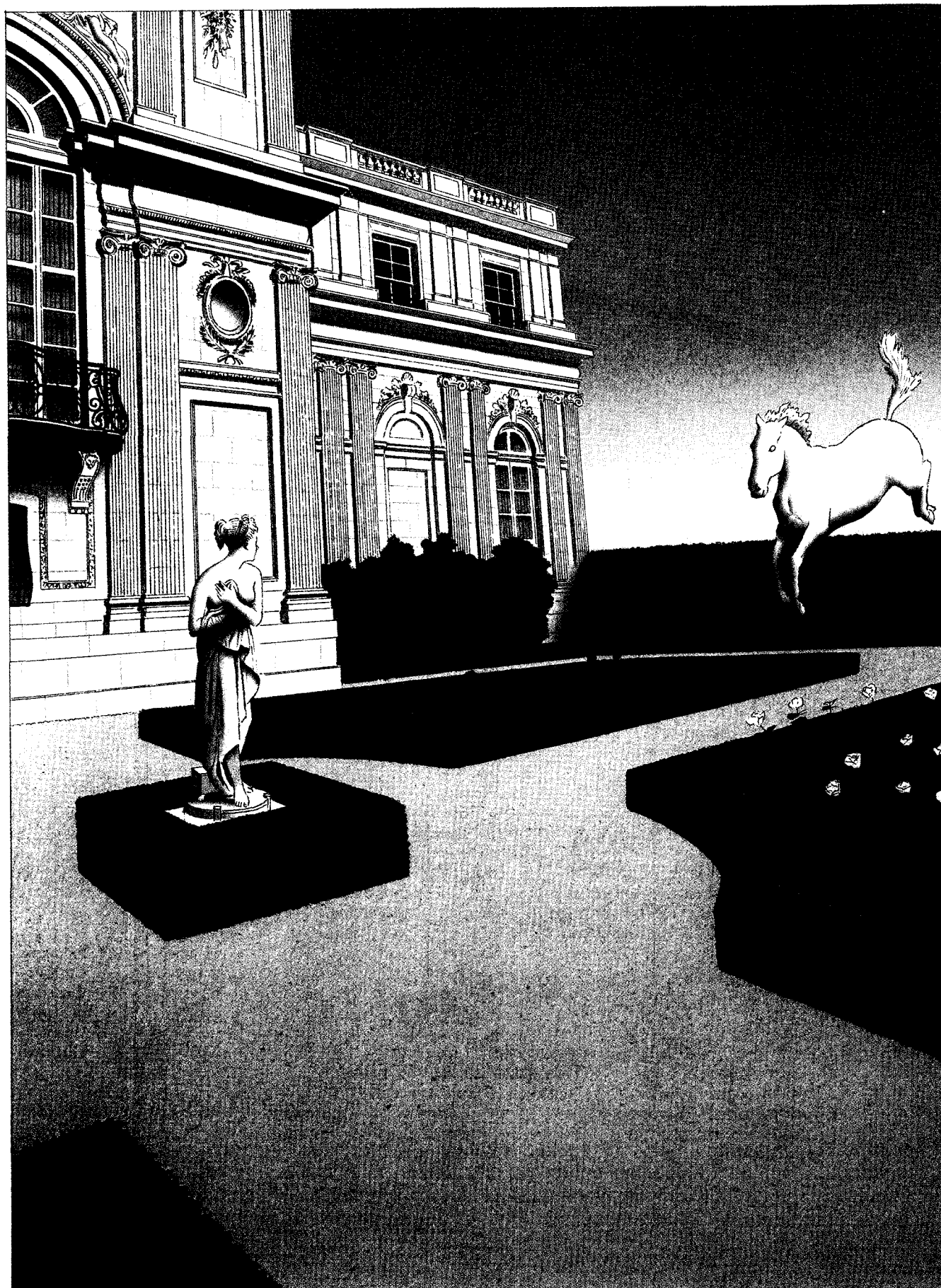
This and many other factors will make the United States less of a nation than it is today, even as it gains territory following the peaceful dissolution of Canada. Quebec, based on the bedrock of Roman Catholicism and Francophone ethnicity, could yet turn out to be North America’s most cohesive and crime-free nation-state. (It may be a smaller Quebec, though, since aboriginal peoples may lop off northern parts of the province.) “Patriotism” will become increasingly regional as people in Alberta and Montana discover that they have far more in common with each other than they do with Ottawa or Washington, and Spanish-speakers in the Southwest discover a greater commonality with Mexico City. (*The Nine Nations of North America*, by Joel Garreau, a book about the continent’s regionalization, is more relevant now than when it was published, in 1981.) As Washington’s influence wanes, and with it the traditional symbols of American patriotism, North Americans will take psychological refuge in their insulated communities and cultures.

**R**ETURNING from West Africa last fall was an illuminating ordeal. After leaving Abidjan, my Air Afrique flight landed in Dakar, Senegal, where all passengers had to disembark in order to go through another security check, this one demanded by U.S. authorities before they would permit the flight to set out for New York. Once we were in New York, despite the midnight hour, immigration officials at Kennedy Airport held up disembarkation by conducting quick interrogations of the aircraft’s passengers—this was in addition to all the normal immigration and customs procedures. It was apparent that drug smuggling, disease, and other factors had contributed to the toughest security procedures I have ever encountered when returning from overseas.

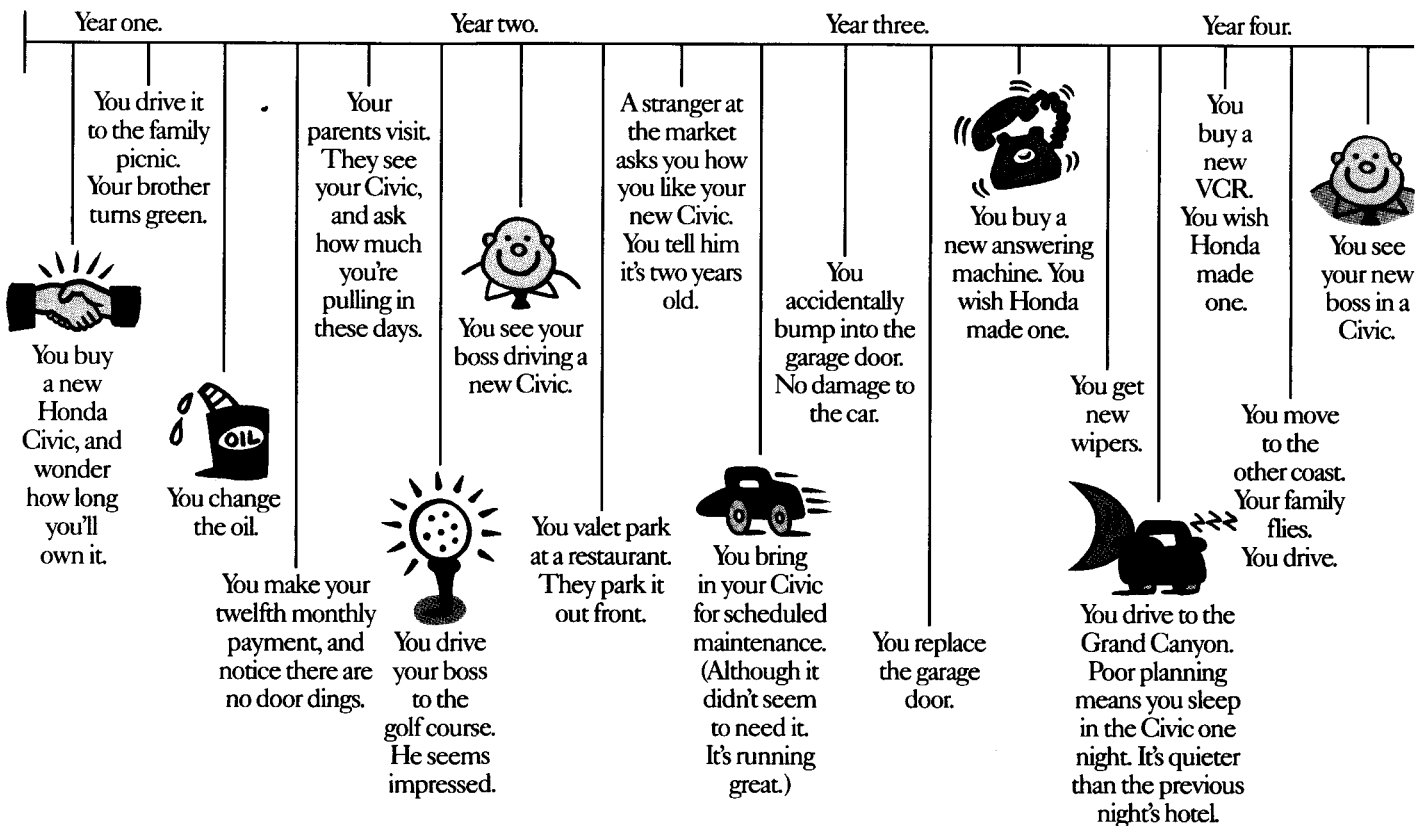
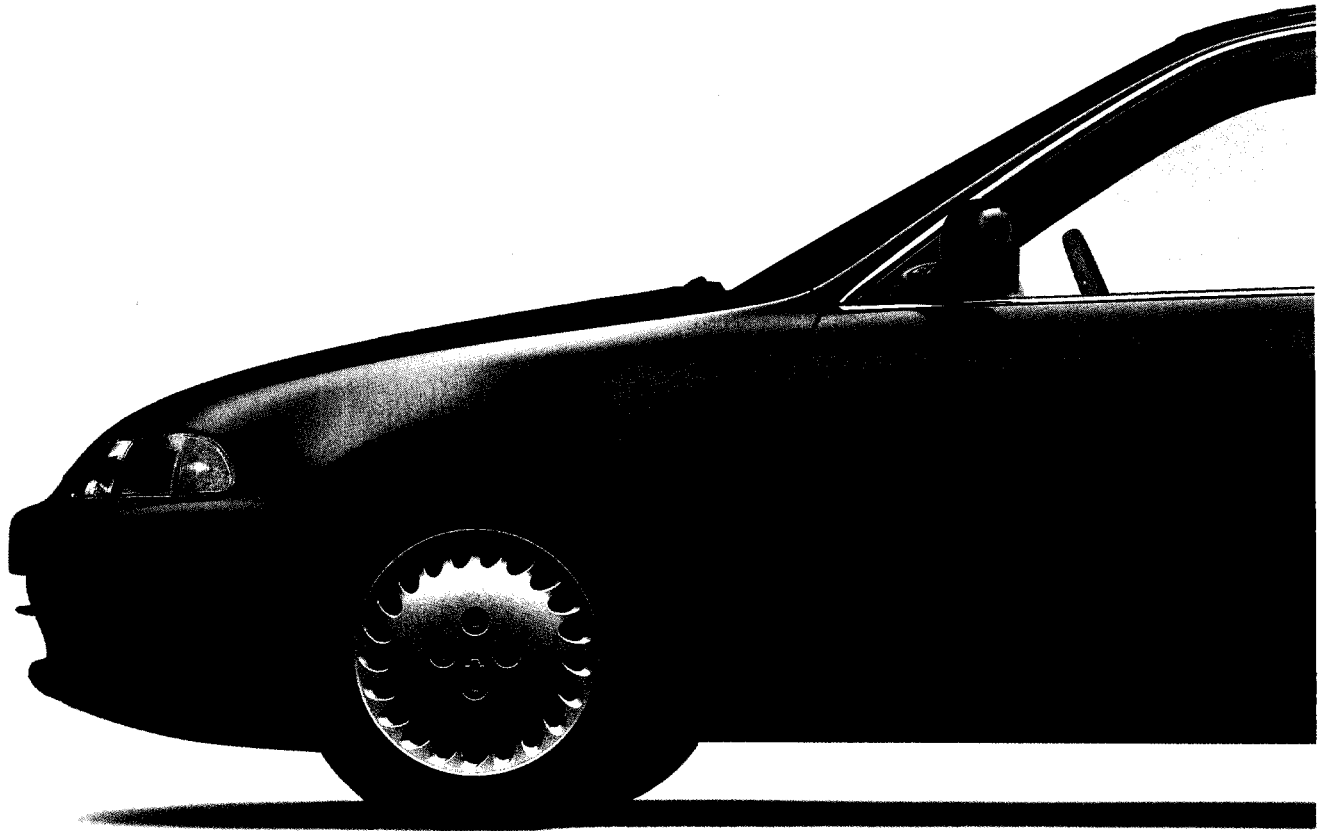
Then, for the first time in over a month, I spotted businesspeople with attaché cases and laptop computers. When I had left New York for Abidjan, all the businesspeople were boarding planes for Seoul and Tokyo, which departed from gates near Air Afrique’s. The only non-Africans off to West Africa had been relief workers in T-shirts and khakis. Although the borders within West Africa are increasingly unreal, those separating West Africa from the outside world are in various ways becoming more impenetrable.

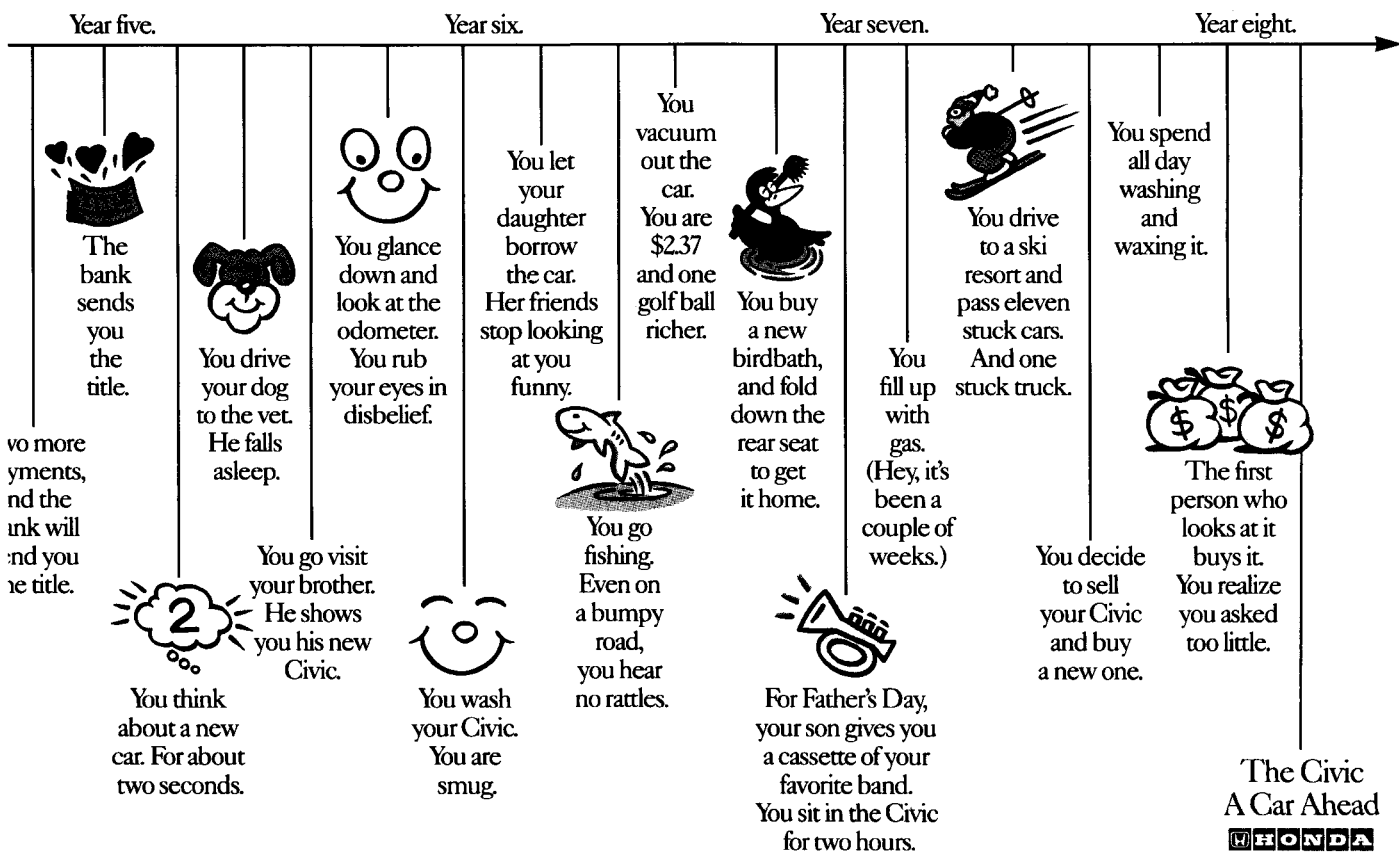
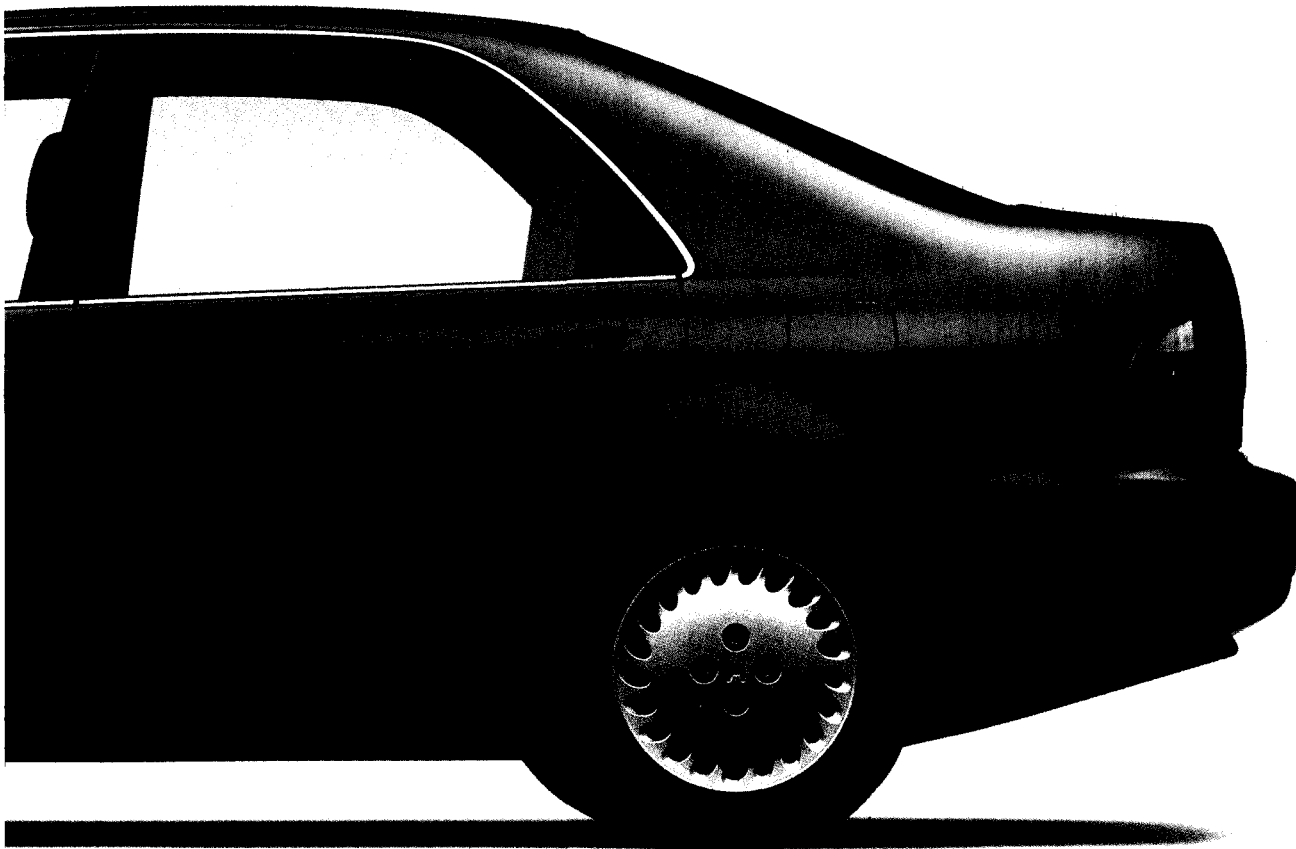
But Afrocentrists are right in one respect: we ignore this dying region at our own risk. When the Berlin Wall was falling, in November of 1989, I happened to be in Kosovo, covering a riot between Serbs and Albanians. The future was in Kosovo, I told myself that night, not in Berlin. The same day that Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat clasped hands on the White House lawn, my Air Afrique plane was approaching Bamako, Mali, revealing corrugated-zinc shacks at the edge of an expanding desert. The real news wasn’t at the White House, I realized. It was right below. ☛











# DAYS



## MOCKINGBIRDS

This morning  
two mockingbirds  
in the green field  
were spinning and tossing

the white ribbons  
of their songs  
into the air.  
I had nothing

better to do  
than listen.  
I mean this  
seriously.

In Greece,  
a long time ago,  
an old couple  
opened their door

to two strangers  
who were,  
it soon appeared,  
not men at all,

but gods.  
It is my favorite story—  
how the old couple  
had almost nothing to give

but their willingness  
to be attentive—  
but for this alone  
the gods loved them

and blessed them—  
when they rose  
out of their mortal bodies,  
like a million particles of water

from a fountain,  
the light  
swept into all the corners  
of the cottage,

and the old couple,  
shaken with understanding,  
bowed down—  
but still they asked for nothing

but the difficult life  
which they had already.  
And the gods smiled, as they vanished,  
clapping their great wings.

Wherever it was  
I was supposed to be  
this morning—  
whatever it was I said

I would be doing—  
I was standing  
at the edge of the field—  
I was hurrying

through my own soul,  
opening its dark doors—  
I was leaning out;  
I was listening.

—MARY OLIVER



## THE LOVE OF AGED HORSES

Because I know tomorrow  
his faithful gelding heart will be broken  
when the spotted mare is trailered and driven away,  
I come today to take him for a gallop on Diaz Ridge.

Returning, he will whinny for his love.  
Ancient, spavined,  
her white parts red with hill-dust,  
her red parts whitened with the same, she never answers.

But today, when I turn him loose at the hill-gate  
with the taste of chewed oat on his tongue  
and the saddle-sweat rinsed off with water,  
I know he will canter, however tired,  
whinnying wildly up the ridge's near side,  
and I know he will find her.

He will be filled with the sureness of horses  
whose bellies are grain-filled,  
whose long-ribbed loneliness  
can be scratched into no-longer-lonely.

His long teeth on her withers,  
her rough-coated spots will grow damp and wild.  
Her long teeth on his withers,  
his oiled-teakwood smoothness will grow damp and wild.  
Their shadows' chiasmus will fleck and fill with flies,  
the eight marks of their fortune stamp and then cancel the earth.  
From ear-flick to tail-switch, they stand in one body.  
No luck is as boundless as theirs.

—JANE HIRSHFIELD

## THE SCREENED PORCH

A chorus upon the pure  
formal fling of myself  
on the axis of the world  
across the porch, the lawn,  
the concrete steps, the beach,  
projectile, arrow, bird—  
out of the dark and brown  
bookshelved living room  
the catapulting feet

tiny, naked, pounding  
the Navaho rugs, the call  
of gulls, the shuffle of oaks,  
the blade of threshold brass,  
the porch air bright and warm,  
smell of the sun, a figure  
shadowy on the swing  
or creaking in the wicker,  
the smash through the screen door,

the stone path chilly, the pierce  
of stones, the downward leap  
through the gap in the hot wall  
to the pale and yielding sand,  
the lake, the far dissolving  
horizon of New York State,  
the screen door slam behind.

—ROBERT CAMPBELL

## THE THIRD DAY

When they came to the tomb  
What did they see?  
Only what they could not say.

Too empty, too cold  
To say what they saw,  
Too full to say empty

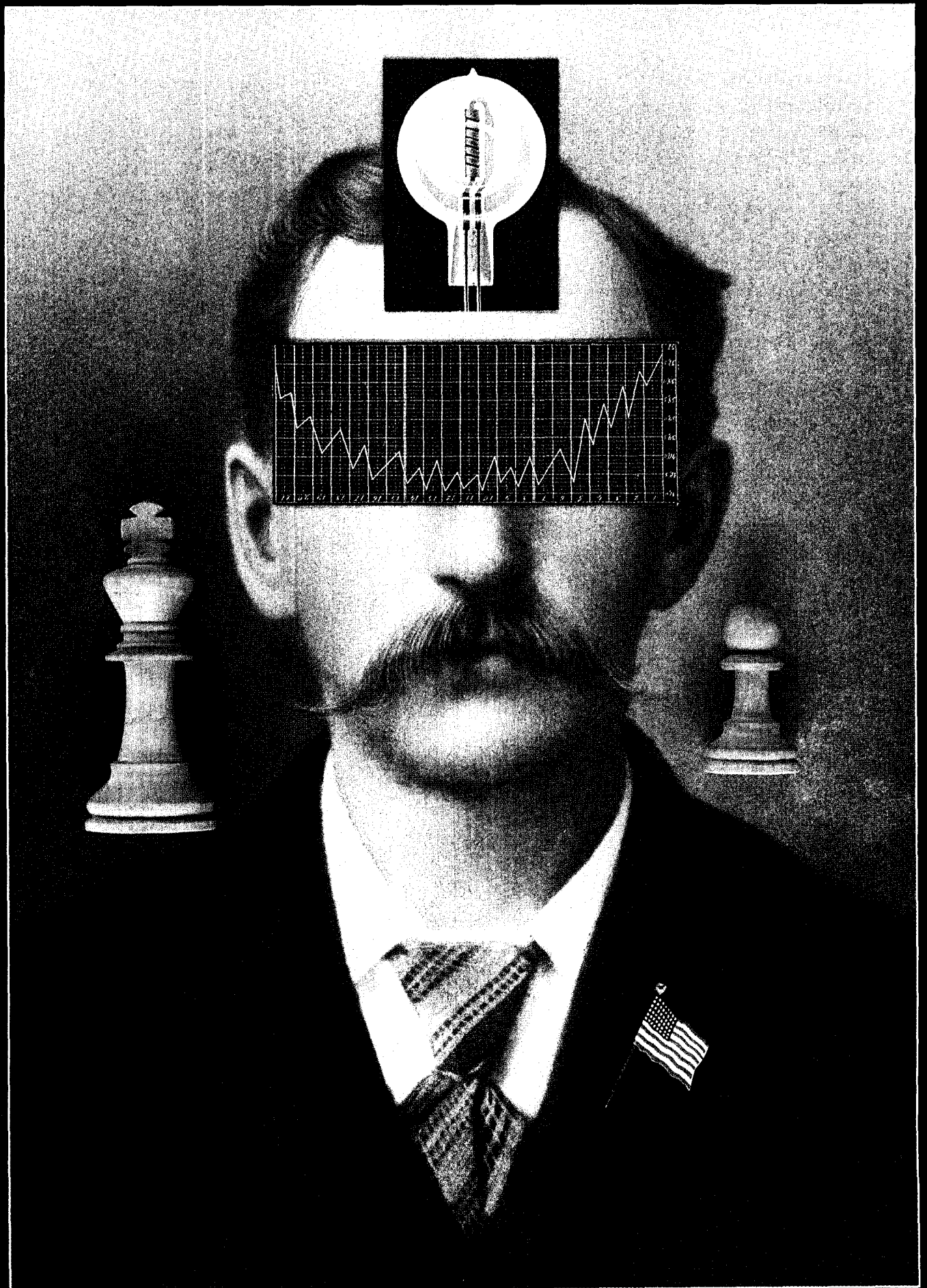
And cold, but full.  
They said what they said,  
Saw what they saw,  
  
And knew they could not  
Say what they saw.  
They did not know

That whatever words they found  
To say would fill the world  
With those very words,

The best they could find  
In that place, that time,  
When all words fail or fall.

After the stone is rolled away,  
After the sky refuses to reply,  
Comes the heaviness of being here.

—PHILLIS LEVIN



# Is There a Science of Success?

by NICHOLAS LEMANN

*Americans have always believed in the power of self-determination and in their ability, with coaching, to change their attitudes—and their lives. But researchers have rarely bothered to study whether motivation has any measurable effect on the way a person's life turns out. One who has bothered is the psychologist David McClelland, who in a fifty-year career has never quite achieved the success he himself wanted*

**T**HE all-time best-selling recording of spoken words is, according to its publisher, a motivational talk called "The Strangest Secret," by Earl Nightingale. I don't think I'll cut into its sales much if I reveal what the strangest secret is: "We become what we think about." Nightingale says, that is, that where a person winds up in the social structure is the result of his or her state of mind. Educated, high-minded people are conditioned to think of such a message as, at best, lovable American bunkum of the kind dispensed by the minor characters in *Huckleberry Finn* or, at worst, insidious propaganda that leads to hopeless dreams of glory. The classic statement of the second view is *Death of a Salesman*, in which Willy Loman first allows success propaganda to lead him into a phony career that has "no rock bottom" (as one of his acquaintances puts it) and then blames himself for his failure to get rich.

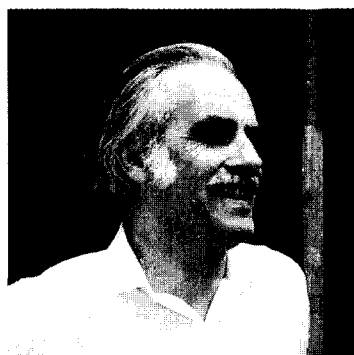
You'll recall that Willy constantly holds up to his sons the example of his brother Ben, who was "success incar-

nate." In one scene Willy dreams that Ben has come to visit him, in order to urge him on in the pursuit of the bitch goddess. "The jungle is dark but full of diamonds, Willy," Ben says portentously. This appears to be a barely disguised reference to "Acres of Diamonds," a sermon by Russell H. Conwell, the pastor of the Grace Baptist Church, in Philadelphia, which was one of the two most popular American inspirational texts during the first half of this century. The theme of "Acres of Diamonds" is that men of humble origins can find great wealth in their own back yards, if they are diligent and have high aspirations. "Friends, never in the history of our country was there an opportunity so great for the poor man to get rich as there is now in the city of Philadelphia," Conwell said.

"The Strangest Secret" is a postwar version of "Acres of Diamonds" and "A Message to Garcia," by Elbert Hubbard, the other most popular inspirational text, which extracts lessons from an incident of heroism during the Spanish-American War. "It is not book-learning young men need," Hubbard wrote, "nor instruction about this and that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, concentrate their energies: do the thing."

Earl Nightingale is gone now (he died in 1989), but pop

motivation material retains its great appeal in American society. That appeal is one of the distinctive aspects of the national culture, demonstrating how much stronger a hold the idea of universal opportunity has here than it has in the rest of the world. Motivational books are always on the best-



David McClelland in the 1960s

Courtesy of David McClelland



seller list. Most people who work for a big company have been exposed at one time or another to a motivational speaker or “trainer” who rides the circuit from corporate retreat to corporate retreat. During the 1970s motivational material made the leap from books to tape cassettes that people listen to on the way to work, and in the 1980s it became a staple of the thirty-minute “infomercials” you may run across on television when you have insomnia. (The leading publisher of motivational material told me that when he opened an office in England, he knew he was in for a long siege when one of his employees there asked him, in puzzlement, “If somebody wins, doesn’t that mean somebody else has to lose?”)

distributorships. But the main themes are quite consistent. People are exhorted to develop an optimistic cast of mind and then to generate lists of specific goals. The message is usually delivered by a dynamic, stentorian announcer who promises to reveal magical secrets and who refers vaguely to “scientific studies.” Often the customers are taken away from their ordinary lives for a few days and put into an enclosed, self-referential environment to receive the message. The industry is skewed toward fast-growing areas like southern California, Florida, and Texas, toward salesmen, and toward people who are ambitious but aren’t comfortably settled into a role: frontier America, such as it still is.

be five times ahead of him,” Willy tells Biff. Guess what? It’s Biff who becomes a failure and Bernard who gets to be a big success. In one scene Willy pathetically asks the grown-up Bernard why Biff never “caught on”; Bernard, who’s in a hurry because he’s on his way to Washington to try a case before the Supreme Court, takes a minute to explain that Biff was never forced by his family to complete the course that would have gotten him into college.

Miller’s message, revealing a nice-Jewish-boy essence just beneath the façade of the angry left-wing social critic, today seems so conventional as to be impossible to recapitulate with a straight face. There is no discernible moral distinction between Miller’s admiration for Bernard the lawyer (who has a pair of tennis rackets onstage next to him—he’s going to be staying with a friend who has his own private court) and Willy’s admiration for Ben, the acres-of-diamonds brother. The only real difference between Bernard and Willy is a practical one: Bernard (and Arthur Miller) did a better job than Willy of scoping out the route to the top of American society.

The Bernards—the people, that is, who interact favorably with the higher-education system—are now so obviously in the saddle in this country that Willy Loman’s view, that motivation is more important than credentials, has come to seem appealingly democratic and daring. It may just be coincidence, but under the Bernard regime the national economy hasn’t had the zip it had in the heyday of “A Message to Garcia,” and the people this has hurt worst are the working class and the poor. Moreover, who, even among the Bernards, hasn’t entertained the thought that attaining an optimistic mental state and setting goals might actually make a difference in life? Wouldn’t it be worth mounting a full-scale investigation into the question of whether the whole motivation business adds up to anything, as an alternative or additional navigational route through American society, instead of merely being amused, or even revulsed, by it?

The “psychology of achievement”

Courtesy of the Napoleon Hill Foundation



**Napoleon Hill (right) with one of his interviewees, Thomas Edison**

Weekend life-enhancement seminars (Lifespring et al.), support groups, and participatory programs for solving life’s vast array of problems (Alcoholics Anonymous et al.) all come out of the motivation culture. So, to some extent, do educational and moral uplift programs aimed at young people in poor neighborhoods.

The motivation industry, being a weed rather than a cultivated plant, doesn’t have strict boundaries. Some parts are concerned with business success, others with home-brewed psychotherapy, diet and exercise, medical mind-cures, real-estate investment, and pyramid schemes to sell franchises and

### **The Quasi-Science of Success**

**I**N *Death of a Salesman*, Arthur Miller presented an alternative to Willy Loman’s creed in the form of a character named Bernard, a classmate of Willy’s elder son, Biff. In high school Bernard studies hard and everyone makes fun of him, whereas Biff is athletic and popular. It’s obvious to Willy that this difference is going to translate into Biff’s being more successful in later life: “Bernard can get the best marks in school, y’understand, but when he gets out in the business world, y’understand, you are going to

(to steal the title of a currently popular motivational cassette) isn't so easy to investigate. People who have names that begin with "Dr." are a large presence in the motivation industry, but they aren't disposed to conduct controlled experiments aimed at finding out how well their materials work. Probably the closest thing to systematic research was conducted by Napoleon Hill, who in 1908, as a young reporter for a motivational magazine run by a former governor of Tennessee, interviewed Andrew Carnegie, at the time the leading living symbol of rags-to-riches success in America. According to an account later published in *Success* magazine, "After a three-hour session, to Hill's astonishment, Carnegie invited him back to his estate." For several days Carnegie elaborated on an idea he had: that someone should systematically study successful people with the aim of distilling the lessons of their lives into "a practical philosophy of personal achievement which would help the humblest worker to accumulate riches in whatever amount and form he might desire." Then Carnegie surreptitiously activated his stopwatch (thus setting up one of the suspiciously pat scenes that fill pop-motivation literature) and asked Hill to decide in the next sixty seconds if he would be willing to undertake a twenty-year unpaid investigation of "the causes of success and failure." After twenty-nine seconds Hill agreed.

He conducted interviews with more than 500 captains of industry, and turned the results into a book called *Law of Success*. A following volume, *Think and Grow Rich*, ranks with Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* and Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* among the all-time best-selling motivational books. (It conveys some of Hill's eminence in the motivation industry that W. Clement Stone, the waxed-moustached insurance magnate and onetime publisher of *Success*, who was the biggest single contributor to Richard Nixon's 1972 presidential campaign, is building a Hill archive-shrine outside Chicago.) Hill's work, however, is entirely anecdotal; even

that his lengthy inquiry was undertaken at the behest of Andrew Carnegie is hard to pin down, being nowhere mentioned, for example, in Carnegie's papers at the Library of Congress.

**I**N mainstream academia the most substantial record of examining the relationship between motivation and economic success has been established by David C. McClelland, a psychologist who spent long periods at Wesleyan and Harvard and now teaches at Boston University. McClelland would be the hands-down winner in a casting call for someone to play God. Six-foot-two, seventy-six years old, he is lanky and erect, with long snow-white hair, a white goatee, thick black eyebrows,

**P**eople who have names that begin with "Dr." are a large presence in the motivation industry, but they aren't disposed to conduct controlled experiments.

big deep-set eyes, and a prominent nose, chin, and brow. If God is not to be fierce or angry, then McClelland's personality is right for the part too: gentle, tolerant, broadly curious, morally concerned.

It takes some nerve to discuss McClelland in the context of the motivation industry, for which he has no respect and whose approaches over the years about forming strategic alliances he has always rebuffed. McClelland finds both professionally and personally bothersome the industry's habit of making fantastic claims about how people can satisfy their greed. Still, McClelland, along with his protégés, colleagues, and critics, has spent decades

building up an experimentally derived record pertaining to the connection between what we think about and what we become. This record provides almost the only basis for considering the issue of motivation in American society in an orderly, rational fashion.

### A Disturbing Test

**T**HE Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), published by Harvard University Press, comes in a thin robin's-egg-blue box with a warning on the cover: "This test is sold on the understanding that the plates are not to be publicly displayed *and may be purchased only by authorized persons.*"

All important tests are kept secret from their potential takers so that they can't figure out the answers beforehand, but in this case what's inside the box seems to justify the warning purely because of how disturbing its contents are. Here we have a series of black-and-white drawings and photographs reproduced on stiff cardboard, which have the unsettling quality of tapping into some reservoir of insoluble anguish within every human soul. An unconscious naked woman with big breasts and flowing hair lies on a bed; next to the bed stands a man in a necktie, turned away from her, his face buried in the crook of his arm. A teenage boy dressed in a suit stands in an operating theater where a doctor holds a knife poised over a patient's abdomen; a large rifle floats across the edge of the picture. A woman stands in a doorway, shakily, with her head in her hand. A beautiful, seductive woman embraces a handsome, supermasculine man, but he turns away with a look of dread on his face. A witch or crone stands just behind a woman who may not notice her but nonetheless appears troubled.

Like the Rorschach test (the one with inkblots), the TAT is what's called a "projective test": the test-taker is shown the pictures and asked to tell

stories about them, and these, in the words of Henry A. Murray, the TAT's inventor, "expose the underlying inhibited tendencies which the subject . . . is not willing to admit, or can not admit because he is unconscious of them." Afterward "the subject leaves the test happily unaware that he has presented the psychologist with what amounts to an X-ray picture of his inner self." Murray was one of the great characters in the history of American psychology. A tall, dapper man, born to great wealth, educated at Groton and Harvard, he became a medical doctor, and then his life was transformed when, during an Atlantic crossing in 1924, he read *Moby Dick*. That plunge into the realm of overpowering obsessions and symbols persuaded him to become a psychologist. He became a professor at Harvard and one of the pioneering thinkers about what he liked to call "personology."

Murray developed the TAT during the late 1930s, partly in collaboration with his lover, Christiana Morgan, a student of Jung's, who drew some of the more tortured of the TAT's pictures. As a diagnostic instrument the TAT was meant to aid in the study of Murray's main area of interest, the role of deep-seated "psychogenic needs" in shaping people's lives. Following Freud, Murray believed that people don't behave in a straightforward fashion; instead, much of motivation is an oblique recasting of unconscious material. The TAT is supposed to call forth fantasies that, like Freud's psychoanalytic free associations, bring some of these secrets to the surface. During the Second World War, Murray worked with the Office of Strategic Services (precursor to the CIA) to develop ways of selecting spies. But on the whole he was out to learn about the unknown, not to provide practical aid in the operation of society. He developed a schema of more than two dozen funda-

mental needs, and they have a dark, furry, Middle European feel: *n* Dominance (to use his shorthand for "need"), *n* Exhibition, *n* Abasement.

**D**AVID McClelland descends from hardheaded, rational authority figures. His paternal grandfather was the presiding judge of the United States Court of Customs. His father, a minister, was the president of a small Methodist women's college in the town of Jacksonville, Illinois. McClelland was a sickly, brainy child: he didn't start school until the third grade, but

by the time he had finished high school he knew four languages.

In a brief memoir he wrote a few years ago, McClelland described an unpleasant routine that went on at his family's dinner table. His father would initiate, under the banner of ruthless objectivity, a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of his latest sermon. But "in the end the thrust and counterthrust of argument often became quite personal, and a quarrel developed in which tempers flared. . . . I came to hate these family arguments. . . . and sought to avoid them as much as possible, eventually by putting as much distance between myself and my family as I could, after going to college." At seventeen McClelland left the Midwest. He went to college in Connecticut, at Wesleyan, his father's alma mater and a school named after the founder of Methodism, and then to graduate school in psychology at Yale, where he was trained in the experimental side of the discipline—the side involving white rats and mazes—and wrote his dissertation on the memorization of nonsense syllables. He also left the Methodist Church and became a Quaker.

McClelland's early career seems to have been an attempt to detach from his father's mysterious rage the atmosphere of scientism, of improvement, in which he was raised and attach it instead to a

gentler, calmer set of emotions. Hence his choice of a career as a laboratory investigator of the processes of the human mind; hence also his marriage to a fellow Quaker immediately after college. During the Second World War, when, as a conscientious objector, McClelland was working and teaching in Philadelphia, he discovered the work of Henry Murray. After the war he returned to Wesleyan as a professor and embarked on his real life's work, which was, as he conceived it, "to be tough-minded (i.e., experimental) about a tender-minded subject (i.e., human motivation)."

Although it was Murray's influence that drew McClelland toward human motivation as a subject, and although Murray's invention, the TAT, became McClelland's basic research tool, and although Murray and McClelland developed a close relationship, the two men were looking for quite different things. For Murray, unruly compulsions were not merely interesting, they were of primary interest. McClelland had no inclination to explore the murky regions of the mind unless doing so would produce some kind of rational, quantifiable, productive payoff; in that way he would transmute the unpleasant into useful knowledge.

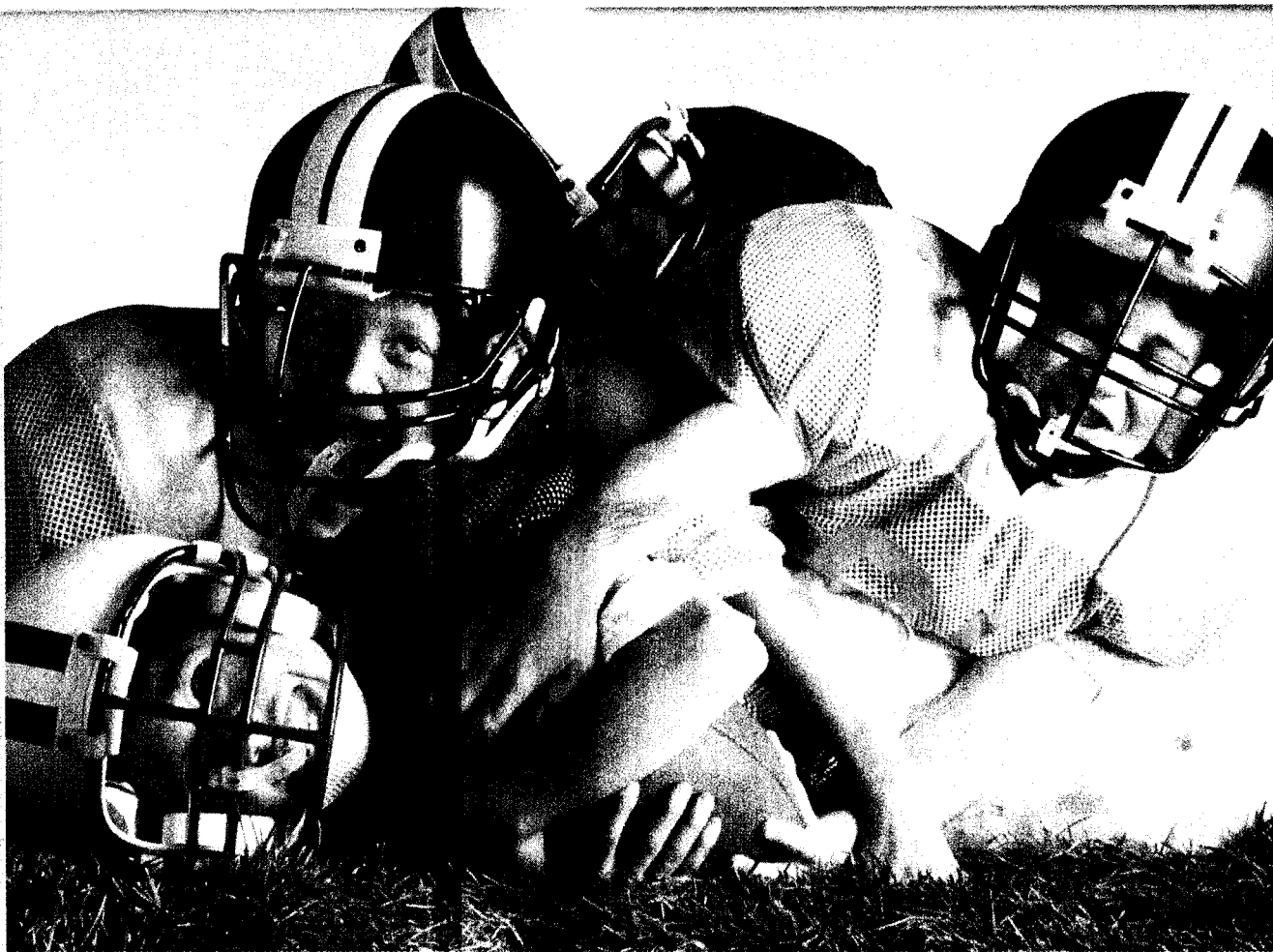
McClelland first set out to demonstrate that the TAT could provide a more accurate reading of people's motives than could be had simply by asking them what their motives were. He did this by working with one of the simplest and most straightforward motives—hunger. Using as his subjects submariners on a Navy base in New London, Connecticut, he created what is known as an "aroused state," by arranging for them to be deprived of food for up to sixteen hours. During the deprivation period, without telling them why, he administered a special TAT in which, as he later put it, "the pictures were chosen, not as in Murray's procedure to tap deep underlying psychodynamic themes, but to represent scenes that could or could not be interpreted in terms of food deprivation." He found that although the sailors weren't necessarily conscious of how hungry they were, "stories relating to food depriva-

Courtesy of David McClelland

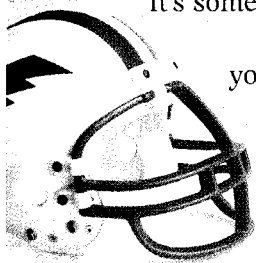


*The minister and the judge*





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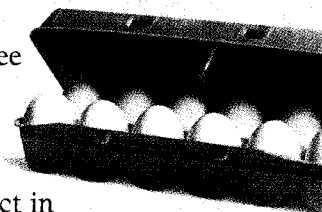
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tion and to implements related to getting food and eating . . . did increase in linear fashion with hours of food deprivation." In other words, a good way to measure the sailors' hunger motive was by administering a TAT.

### The Miracle Motive

**N**EXT McClelland, along with his associates John Atkinson, Thomas Shipley, and Joseph Veroff, plucked out of Murray's list of needs the three that most interested him: *n* Achievement, *n* Power, and *n* Affiliation—*n* Power being a brightened-up version of Murray's *n* Dominance. He was reducing Murray's map of the human personality, keeping only the sections that pertained to people's public lives and leaving out the private, intimate, secret areas that most interested Murray. Now he could use the TAT to study progress. The modified TAT that he developed at this time looks, beside Murray's, resolutely normal. The opening picture shows two men, working in what appears to be a laboratory, looking at an object one of them is holding up. Another shows a boy sitting at a desk thinking, and another, taken from Murray, shows an older man and a younger man together, wearing what are by TAT standards remarkably untroubled expressions.

(Although McClelland's credentials for sensitivity to feminist concerns are by now in good order, in the late 1940s he studied only men and used only male images.)

In a series of experiments performed on Wesleyan students, McClelland proceeded to do for *n* Achievement what

he had done for hunger: he aroused the motive (for example, by telling his subjects they were about to be given a test that would determine conclusively their intelligence and leadership potential), administered the TAT, and then coded and scored the subjects' stories. Each subject could thus be given a numerical *n* Achievement score. Next McClelland demonstrated that the score corresponded to some real-world quality by proving that the higher the *n* Achievement score, the likelier a student was to perform certain tasks (such as unscrambling anagrams) quickly and successfully. The effort to identify, isolate, and measure *n* Achievement became the basis for McClelland's book *The Achievement Motive* (written with Atkinson and others), which was published in 1953.

The *n* Achievement work took place

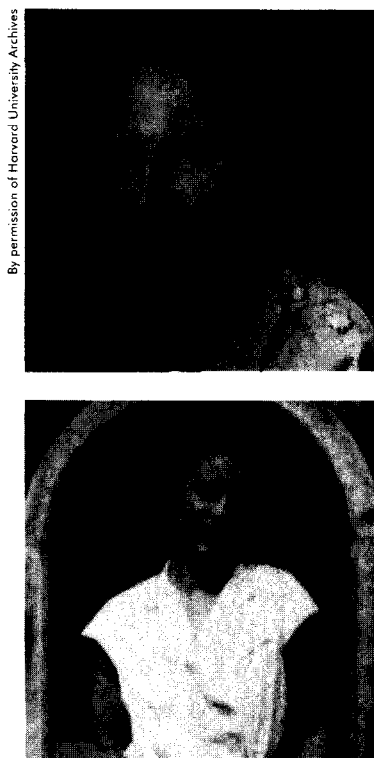
during what in academia was the beginning of the glory days of the postwar liberal consensus. The universities were growing rapidly in size and importance—a condition that always creates an optimistic aura. Confidence about what could be accomplished by the (then relatively new) social sciences, first conceptually and perhaps later practically, in partnership with government, was boundless. Harvard, for example, in the late 1940s set up an ambitious new Department of Social Relations, which blended the fields of

psychology, anthropology, and sociology and was home to such giants as Henry Murray, Gordon Allport, Talcott Parsons, Jerome Bruner, and Clyde Kluckhohn; McClelland taught there in the 1949–1950 school year.

The academic establishment was in substantial agreement about the power

of Soc Rel and similar efforts to solve most of the problems of the world, and about what the solutions would look like: economic development in the Third World, an end to communism and other forms of totalitarianism, the expansion of education, the elimination of prejudice, and, within the United States, a gradual victory of the forces of enlightenment over Babbitttry, McCarthyism, conformity, and blandness. From where McClelland sat, then, Achievement looked like the good need and Power and Affiliation like the bad needs. *N* Power connoted Hitler and Stalin or, at the very least, the petty despotism of politicians and corporate executives. *N* Affiliation brought to mind David Riesman's "other-directed" conformists, the Organization Man, gray flannel suits, suburban cocktail parties, and similar bugaboos of fifties intellectuals. *N* Achievement was pure: democratic, independent, productive.

But after you had identified it, then what? Achievement seemed too important to be allowed to lie inert in psychology textbooks. McClelland began to explore the line of inquiry that Freud had laid out in *Civilization and Its Discontents*: he wondered whether societies have personalities that are structured along the same lines as the personalities of the millions of individuals who make them up. McClelland's particular inspiration here was Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, which posits that a change in culture or societal psychological orientation (namely, the Reformation) was the cause of an economic change (the birth of industrial capitalism). To McClelland, the son of a Protestant minister and a professor at a college founded by Protestants, Weber's Protestant ethic, with its emphasis on "reliance on the self, so far as salvation was concerned," looked a lot like *n* Achievement. In 1955, at the Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, the main annual conclave of motivational psychologists, McClelland delivered a paper called "Some Social Consequences of Achievement Motivation," in which, after admitting that he was making "a breathtaking leap of



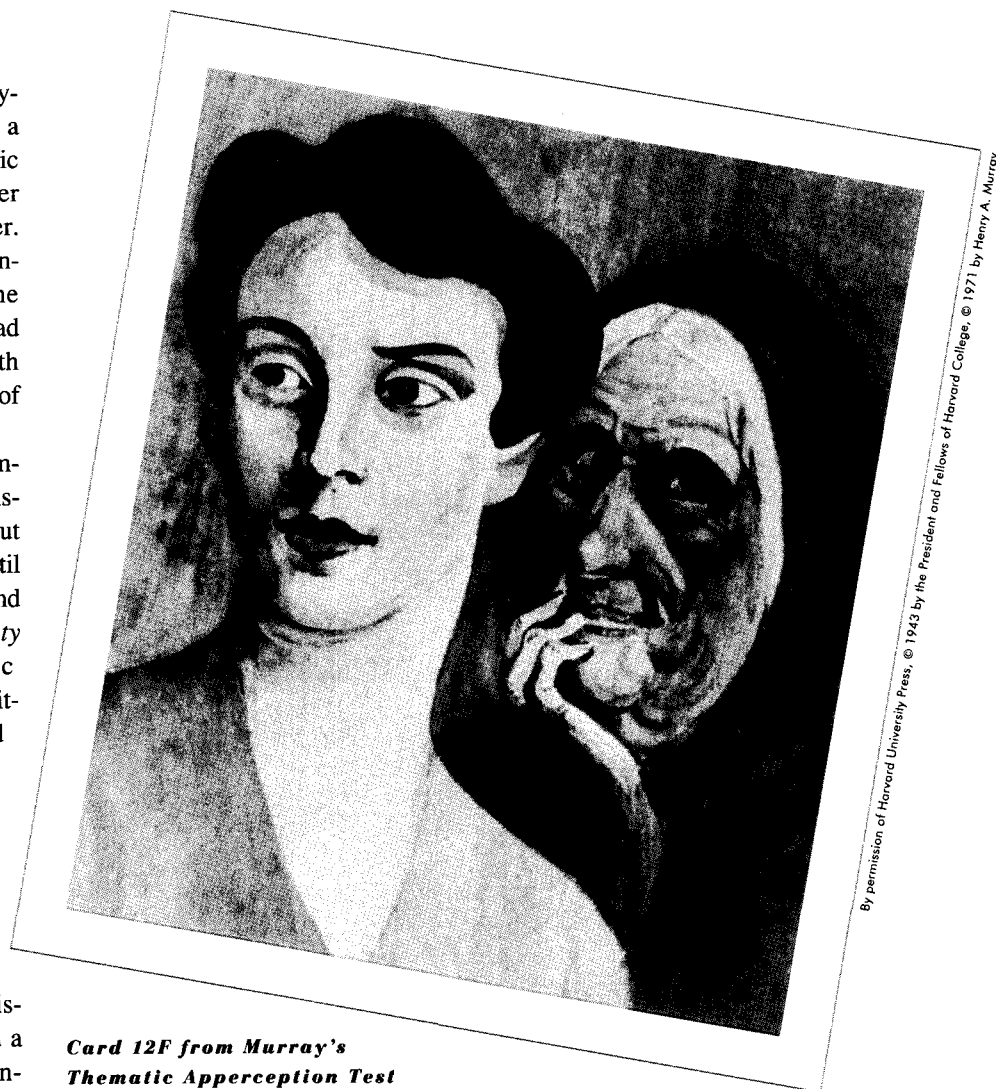
Henry A. Murray and his collaborator Christiana Morgan



hypothesizing so far as the average psychologist is concerned," he produced a chart comparing Protestant and Catholic countries by their average annual per capita consumption of electric power. The mean score of the Protestant countries was quadruple the score of the Catholic countries—so McClelland had statistically demonstrated the strength of the Protestant ethic, and therefore of *n* Achievement.

"That's not psychology!" one member of the audience said in a stage whisper after McClelland read the paper. But McClelland stayed with the point until he had produced his most ambitious and unusual book, *The Achieving Society* (1961). A work of almost hubristic scope, it blends history, psychology, literary and art criticism, sociology, and economics to try to account in a sweeping, unitary way for the rise and fall of civilizations by identifying fluctuations in their *n* Achievement, *n* Power, and *n* Affiliation scores.

Because McClelland insisted that all his assertions be backed by statistics, he and his colleagues expended a great deal of effort on devising non-TAT means of measuring societal *n* Achievement and its economic consequences. The basic method was to code and score a country's leading children's stories (which have a high fantasy content) for *n* Achievement, *n* Power, and *n* Affiliation, as one would a TAT, and then to cross-tabulate the scores with the rate of growth in electrical output. For long-past societies McClelland used adult rather than children's literature as the basic measure of *n* Achievement, although he also coded the imagery on ancient Greek vases (a lot of diagonals in the design meant high *n* Achievement, unused space at the bottom low *n* Achievement) and the shapes of pre-Colombian Peruvian funerary urns. Sure enough, he found that societies grew when their *n* Achievement levels were high and decayed when *n* Power and *n* Affiliation began to dominate. It almost goes without saying that *The Achieving Society* has attracted a great deal of skepticism over the years—but it is stunning in its way.



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Card 12F from Murray's  
*Thematic Apperception Test*

### Beefing Up Motivation

**A**S conceptually and methodologically out there as *The Achieving Society* was, it remained under the roof of Freud's and Murray's ideas about human motivation. McClelland assumed that the deeper motives, including *n* Achievement, were formed during infancy and early childhood, and in adults were fairly immutable. High *n* Achievement came from having a non-judgmental father and a mother who was close, loving, but strict (especially about toilet training). The example he liked to use, of typical McClelland-esque grandeur, was that of Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemachus. *The Achieving Society* assumes that changes in child-rearing practices precede widespread changes in motives. But during the late 1950s, even as he was working on *The Achieving Society*, McClelland began toying with what was, from the

standpoint of "depth psychology," a truly heretical idea, which is also the idea underlying the pop motivation industry: that motives can be substantially and quickly modified in adulthood.

In 1956 McClelland moved from Wesleyan to Harvard. There he began to live the heady life of a big-name professor during the golden age of academia. As a member of a brush-cut, bow-tied, tweed-jacketed order of nobility, he traveled widely, developed a network of students and followers all over the world, and had entrée to the major foundations and to the federal government. Nothing seemed impossible.

In 1958 McClelland ran across a doctoral dissertation from Indiana University, written by R. W. Burris, called "The Effect of Counseling on Achievement Motivation." Burris, a disciple of the behavioral psychologist B. F. Skinner, claimed to have raised students' *n* Achievement scores, and also their grades (subsequent research, by the



Drs. Junkins, Kwiatkowski, Cuervo, and Huang haven't been doctors long enough to know they're supposed to drive one of those overpriced luxury imports.

When Ed, Janet, Beth, and Jim emerged, successfully, from medical school, they felt the gratification of having achieved a lifelong goal, while also confronting a hard reality common to most young doctors—a ton of student loan debt. (You could buy five Saturns with what a new M.D. typically owes.)

In Ed's case, that hard reality also included his 10-year-old car—nobody could tell him how much time it had left. Since a pediatric resident's life is ruled by a beeper (and because you can't tell a sick kid that the tow truck was late), Ed bit the bullet and went looking for a new car.



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Since then, mostly on his referral, many of Ed's colleagues have been filling the hospital parking lot with new Saturns. (Apparently, the people who pay most attention to a doctor's advice are other doctors.)



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*Jim, Ed, Janet,  
and Beth (left to right)  
bought their Saturns at  
Saturn of Owings Mills,  
and Saturn of Glen Burnie.*



way, has not found a strong connection between *n* Achievement and grades), simply by giving them counseling sessions on how to increase the *n* Achievement content of their TAT stories. The implication of Burris's argument was that if you "taught to the test," you weren't cheating—you were actually increasing the innate quality the test measured.

Also in 1958, in Italy, McClelland met Timothy Leary, a former West Point cadet who had quit the service and gone into academic psychology, and McClelland arranged for him to come to Harvard as a lecturer. Leary had the idea that people should be taught to cheat on IQ tests—not to beat the system (well, maybe a little) but on the rationale that there was no real difference between a higher IQ score, however achieved, and a higher IQ. "I thought that was smart as hell," McClelland says. In 1960 Leary wrote a paper in which he called for the abolition of secrecy in psychological testing. Instead, he wrote, "the subject and the therapist (i.e., the collaborators in the joint research) agree as to which natural records they want to change." His idea about testing was embedded in a larger idea about the mind: that it is highly subject to modification at any time, rather than being static and measurable. An Earl Nightingale-like line appears in the paper: "What we think about we are likely to do."

McClelland decided to devise an achievement-motivation training course that would operate on the assumption that if someone were taught "to think, talk, and act like a person with high *n* Achievement," that person would actually acquire higher *n* Achievement. The course would be offered in underdeveloped countries, where the cultural habits that lead to economic growth had never taken root. As McClelland says now, he wanted to "train people to become the kind of people economists

think everybody is." If it worked, the potential impact of the training course would be enormous. McClelland would be proving under controlled scientific circumstances that motives could effectively be altered, and this would have many applications, both practical and theoretical, within the social sciences. With the promise of a substantial grant from the Agency for International Development to start the course in India, Tunisia, and southern Italy, he arranged to take the 1963–1964 school year off from Harvard. He rented out his house, sold his car, and took off for Delhi.

But after McClelland arrived in Delhi, he learned that AID had changed its mind and wouldn't be funding the project after all. That was in October of 1963. Somehow the project had such a distinctively Camelot coloration that after President Kennedy was killed, the following month, there was no question of its being revived. Thirty years later McClelland is still angry about the ruination of his great moment, which conclusively broke the onward momentum of achievement motivation. What happened? One possibility is that the use of LSD by Leary and another young Harvard protégé of McClelland's, Richard Alpert (now Baba Ram Dass), which had become known by then, made McClelland himself too controversial—even though he was

the one who had dismissed Leary as a Harvard lecturer, for skipping classes he was supposed to be teaching. McClelland himself believes that the problem was something else: that somebody in the Kennedy Administration had run across his invidious economic

comparison of Catholics and Protestants and was afraid that Representative Otto Passman, from heavily Catholic Louisiana, then the chairman of the House committee that controlled AID's budget, would take offense at money's being given to McClelland.

John Kenneth Galbraith, a Harvard

colleague of McClelland's, and the ambassador to India at the time, helped McClelland get a small subvention; the Carnegie Corporation also provided one. There was now enough money to get the course off the ground, though just in India. McClelland had dispatched David Winter, a young associate of his, to India a year earlier to begin setting things up, so the course was nearly ready to go. Fifty-two businessmen in the small city of Kakinada were rounded up and brought in four groups to Hyderabad, 200 miles away, for two weeks of training in achievement motivation.

What strikes a nonpsychologist about the course is how strongly it echoes various techniques of the American motivation industry. Motivational courses don't use the TAT, but they do try to get people to practice changing the content of their fantasies; they do try to create what McClelland calls an "ideal self-image" and the motivation industry calls a "positive mental attitude"; they do rely heavily on goal-setting (in one exercise the businessmen were asked to spend an hour alone thinking about what they'd like to see inscribed on their tombstones), on the use of retreat sites that engender a feeling of "membership in a new and continuing reference group," and on the use of corporate and scientific name-dropping to create an aura of "prestige suggestion" around the course. McClelland and Winter followed the subsequent careers of their trainees, using as controls a group of untrained businessmen from a nearby city, Rajahmundry, and were able to generate statistics showing that the trainees were more likely to engage in subsequent entrepreneurial activity than the non-trainees.

His days in India left McClelland convinced that brief training courses can engender important lasting changes in behavior. A main theme of his subsequent career is the refusal, in his view, of the establishment to take this crucial breakthrough seriously. In 1965 his foundation grants for motivational training in India were reduced—and this was only one of a thousand cuts he



McClelland in India



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has suffered (another was the refusal he got when he tried to persuade Citicorp, which was headed by his college acquaintance Walter Wriston, to institute the course there). As McClelland put it in a letter to me,

To my dismay, I found that nobody was impressed by results—not the government that funded a lot of our research, not the banks who could have implemented the training to improve the performance of their loans, not international aid organizations that are supposed to be promoting economic development, etc. What everyone wanted to know was what

The biblical battle between David and Goliath is one of his touchstones; he has often observed that it is no accident, given whom he was named after, that he is attracted to the role of the underdog. This may help explain why he never seriously considered taking steps that would have made him even more of a rebel and an outsider: he already had just the degree of that status that he wanted. Back in the early 1960s he resisted Timothy Leary's urgings to try psychedelic drugs and in the late 1960s he resisted joining forces with the substantial existing universe of motivation-course operators.

From McClelland's standpoint the problem with the motivation industry is that it has no interest in subjecting its work to experimentation and evaluation. Also, it hopelessly conflates the three essential motives, each of which, he believes, requires different training.

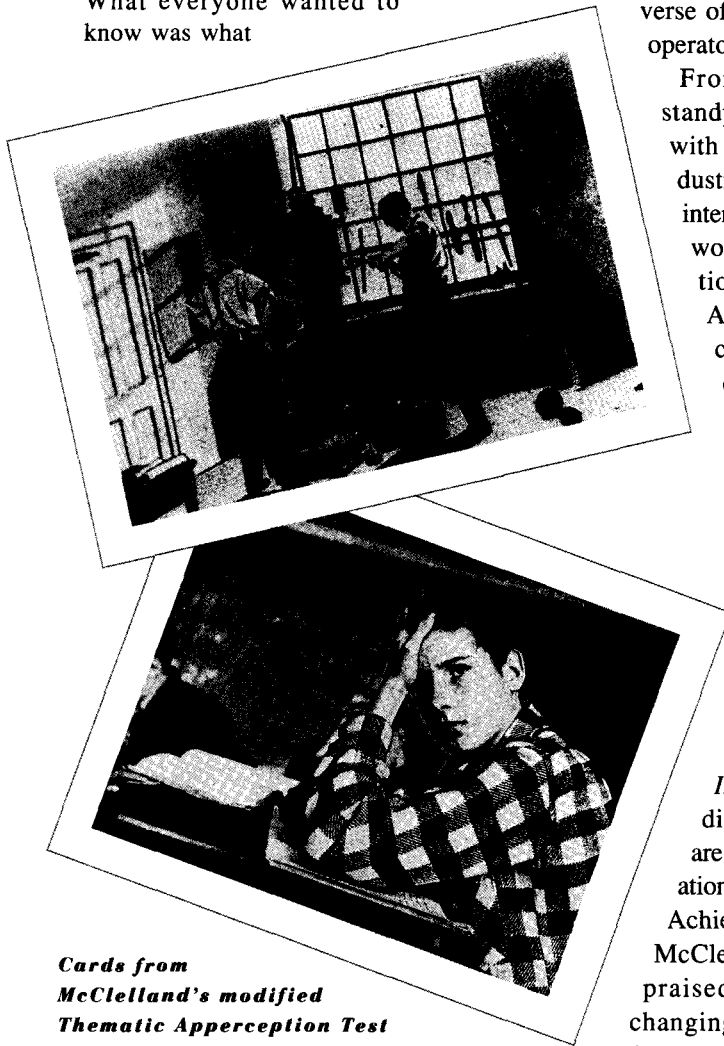
For example, the Dale Carnegie motivational empire grew out of the success of a book whose title, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, indicates that its aims are to increase *n* Affiliation and *n* Power, not *n* Achievement. Although McClelland has publicly praised the motivation-changing abilities of religious organizations such as

said that some of the techniques it suggests might be useful. But Winter went on, "This stuff is largely enmeshed in a set of values that are repellent to me. There is a sort of money focus here that I find repellent. All goals come down to money."

## Power Pursuits

ONE effect of McClelland's misadventures with the forces of respectability was that they stirred up his interest in the power motive. Some of the people around McClelland feel that moving from Wesleyan to Harvard helped to bring the power motive to the fore in his mind. "Wesleyan was all boys and heavily sons of entrepreneurs," says Richard deCharms, a former protégé of McClelland's. "At Harvard everyone was instantly sucking up to Dave, which they never did at Wesleyan." During the late 1960s the Harvard social-relations department began to divide into its component parts, an event that upset McClelland greatly and seemed to him to be another example of the power motive at work. Also, some psychologists in the department undertook a long-term study of members of the Harvard class of 1964, and it was clear as the results began to come in that, as McClelland's former student Joseph Veroff puts it, "the real hotshots turned out to be high in *n* Power but not in *n* Achievement." (McClelland today freely admits that power-motivated people are "more likely to have glamorous lives.") McClelland began to feel that 1960s American society was essentially power-motivated, and that, too, made *n* Power more interesting to him.

By this time McClelland and his followers had refined their definitions of the three motives quite a bit. Achievement, rather than being the universal solvent, was being defined more narrowly; McClelland now says he wishes he had called it Efficiency instead. The person who is high in *n* Achievement is preoccupied with completing series of tangible tasks that produce rewards. If you experiment with every conceivable way to drive to work, time each one, and thereafter always use the fastest, you're



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McClelland's modified  
Thematic Apperception Test

prestigious persons or organizations recommended the training or had tried it—not whether it succeeded.

Even as a Harvard department chairman (as he was at the time of the AID troubles) who moved in high-level social-science, education, foundation, and government circles, McClelland felt himself to be a rebel and an outsider.

the Nation of Islam and the Jesuits, he thinks that the secular American motivation industry focuses too singlemindedly on getting rich as the end toward which all trainees must aim. I asked David Winter, who has developed a technique for scoring political speeches and other texts for motivational content, to read "The Strangest Secret." He



an *n* Achievement person. Achievement people don't necessarily get the highest grades in school, but they make good small-scale entrepreneurs and excel at other solitary, results-oriented pursuits; in academia they are the kind of professors who publish a lot. In one McClelland game, subjects were asked to position themselves for tossing a ring onto a post; the *n* Achievement people put themselves in a position of moderate risk—that is, near enough to the post to have a decent chance of ringing it. Rather than inventing their own goals, achievement-motivated people assimilate the society's and figure out how to reach them. For this reason they tend to be the kind of people who take the road more traveled, but also the kind who turn to crime if they conclude that they can't achieve the goal legitimately.

In the ring-toss game people high in *n* Power would stand far away from the post: they'd rather win spectacularly than regularly. At the roulette wheel they bet on a number, while *n* Achievement people bet on red or black. A slogan of the McClelland circle is "*n* Achievement wants to build a better mousetrap, and *n* Power wants the world to beat a path to his door." The goal of the power-motivated is to influence, to impress, to have an impact on other people. To the extent that they want to make money, they want it so that others will know they have it, so they buy big houses and flashy cars. Politicians are high in *n* Power; the desire for fame is a pure manifestation of the power motive. For corporate managers, as opposed to entrepreneurs, *n* Power is the crucial need (the best executives, according to McClelland, have something he calls "Leadership Motive Pattern": high *n* Power; low *n* Affiliation, so they're not afraid to fire people; and high "activity inhibition," so they don't become tinhorn dictators). High *n* Power people tend to mix together sexuality and power and to value seduction or conquest highly.

If Power was the need of the 1960s, Affiliation began to seem much more interesting in the 1970s, when social critics were focusing on excessive individualism rather than excessive confor-

mity as the country's big problem, and when the ability to maintain warm relationships became part of the working definition of success. A McClelland student named Dan McAdams came up with a new need, related to but not replacing Affiliation, which he called Intimacy (*n* Affiliation is a fear of being disliked or rejected, *n* Intimacy a hope of forming close emotional ties). The name alone puts Intimacy in a much more positive light than Affiliation.

AS this definitional work was going on, McClelland and his colleagues were continuing to develop motivational training courses. McClelland set up a company to run the achievement-motivation training course in India; in the

*What would have happened if American society during the half century since the Second World War had been organized along McClellandesque lines?*

1970s, under the name McBer and Company, it became a sizable concern. McBer trained U.S. Navy personnel in a program to improve leadership and management. It taught managers at General Electric how to use their *n* Power effectively, and it gave achievement-motivation training to workers at the Gdansk shipyard in Poland, including the future leaders of Solidarity. "I always figured that was why they weren't killed," McClelland says. "If they'd been power-motivated, they would have been." McBer's tangled company history, which involved being sold to Saul P. Steinberg (who years later sold it to Saatchi & Saatchi), stimulated McClelland's feeling that he

should develop a better understanding of *n* Power.

The War on Poverty and related government activities got McClelland interested in doing with motivational training in the United States what he had tried to do in the Third World. He could help to heal the ghettos by enhancing *n* Achievement and modifying *n* Power. Associates of McClelland's trained minority entrepreneurs for the Small Business Administration and for the Office of Minority Business Enterprise, and heads of community-action agencies for the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Richard deCharms, now a professor at Washington University, in St. Louis, fell under the influence of a German psychologist named Fritz Heider, who posited a distinction between people who believe that what happens to them is the result of what they have done and people who believe that it is the result of what has been done to them. This became the basis of a McClelland-style motivational course in which DeCharms trained inner-city schoolteachers to get their students to think of themselves as "origins" rather than "pawns." His follow-up studies showed that high-school graduation rates increased. A McClelland student named Abigail Stewart worked on a related field of inquiry, scoring women on "self-definition"—the degree to which they actively conceptualized their lives rather than just accepting what came their way. These notions of internal and external causation are another staple of the pop motivators, who always urge one to become a person who, in Earl Nightingale's words, "knows where he's going," rather than "acting like everyone else . . . without knowing why."

McClelland himself was developing a motivational training course designed to cure alcoholism. Once, in Toronto to give a speech, he had had a couple of drinks beforehand to settle his nerves



and found that his anxiety worsened. This got him thinking that the prevailing view of alcoholism, which held that people drank to reduce anxiety, was wrong. People who drink a lot aren't trying to escape something, he thought. They're trying to *get* something—the feeling that comes after having a couple of drinks. In motivational terms, that feeling is high power combined with low inhibition. After testing the hypothesis and finding that it proved out, McClelland concluded that the way to cure alcoholism in men was to train them to inhibit their power motive so that they wouldn't feel the "impulsive need for power" they had tried to satisfy by drinking. He tried the course on a group that was already in intensive Alcoholics Anonymous-style treatment, and raised the group's rehabilitation rate from 25 to 50 percent—but once again, he couldn't get the world to take heed.

McClelland did write a book called *The Drinking Man*, and then began to explore other health problems associated with highly power-motivated people, such as hypertension and heart attacks. During the 1972–1973 school year McClelland took a sabbatical and lived in Sri Lanka, and he returned bearded, tieless, and devoted to the practice of Buddhist meditation. The McClelland home in Cambridge became a magnet for meditators, mystics, and healers. McClelland met an auto mechanic who called himself Karmu and who temporarily healed a persistent bowel problem of McClelland's that prescription medicine hadn't resolved. During the late 1970s McClelland's wife, Mary, got stomach cancer. The McClellands decided to forgo the standard medical treatments for it, and during her final illness she was under the care of a homeopathic physician.

All this led McClelland to explore another of the great themes of the American motivation industry—mental cures for physical ailments. After conducting a series of experiments that correlated subjects' TAT results with a hormonal analysis of their saliva, he concluded that high "affiliative trust" (as evidenced by the ability to love and be loved) and "agency" (a sense of op-

timism and of being in control of one's life) lead to better health. He also identified the production of a specific hormone called norepinephrine, which may be connected to a decrease in natural immunity, with high *n* Power. As should be unsurprising by now, the medical-research community has not enthusiastically embraced his findings.

**M**CCLELLAND'S own motivational structure has not been particularly well suited to the propagation of his ideas. Rather than endlessly hammering home one theory, he moves around among loosely interrelated interests. Rather than battling his critics, he will gladly point out the weaknesses in his own ideas. Rather than working to set up a tight network of protégés in key academic posts and in grant-making positions, he has watched many of his students wander away from the study of his three key motives. He is resolutely not a pop psychologist, but he also feels uncomfortable within just about every organized, respectable field he knows.

However, the possibility must also be considered that McClelland's work has been less than widely influential because it doesn't deserve to be. The hard, quantitative branch of psychology is suspicious of the idea that motivation is a real scientific concept. Psychological tests are supposed to have two essential qualities: reliability (meaning that a subject's score will be constant from test to test) and validity (meaning that the score correlates with performance in some other activity). IQ scores, for example, are considered reliable because they remain constant over the years, and valid because they correlate with grades in school. TAT-generated motivation scores are notoriously variable. David Winter figured out a way to raise their reliability significantly: in addition to the classic Henry Murray instruction to "be imaginative and creative," he told the test-takers it would be all right if they told the same stories they told the last time. But the image of unreliability persists. The validations of motivation, and especially of motivation courses, rest on

relatively thin data. Skeptical quantitative scholars question McClelland's use of saliva instead of blood to measure hormone levels, and of electrical output instead of GNP to measure economic growth.

Another line of criticism of McClelland—one that really hurts, because it presents him as being an unwitting servant of conservatism rather than a liberal reformer—is that he has greatly overestimated the importance of motivation in shaping people's lives. Social and economic conditions are much more important, this argument goes, and to hold up *n* Achievement training as a cure for poverty is to undercut other anti-poverty measures that would do more good—like giving people money. The Survey Research Center, at the University of Michigan, runs a longitudinal study of people's economic fortunes called the Panel Study of Income Dynamics; when the study began, in 1968, an early McClelland student who teaches at Michigan, Joseph Veroff, put some motivational questions (though not a TAT) into the subjects' questionnaires. A 1985 report on poor people in the study found "no more than modest and usually insignificant effects of the basic motives on economic outcomes." *N* Achievement seemed to have a small positive effect on the lives of poor blacks, but in general education and economic conditions were much more important than motivation in lifting people out of poverty.

### Ability Over Aptitude

**W**HAT is intriguing, though, is to assume that McClelland has been completely right about everything, to grant him retroactively the high power motive that would have made him an effective politician for his ideas, and then to wonder what would have happened if American society during the half century since the Second World War—the long span of McClelland's work on motivation—had been organized along McClellandesque lines. What if McClelland had been able to do for motivation what Abra-

ham Flexner did for health when, in the early twentieth century, he led the way toward the transformation of a great swamp of quacks, sawbones, and patent-medicine skills into our current professionalized medical system? What if we had a precise science of motivation, worked into the weave of the systems of education and employment through which Americans are sorted and slotted, instead of a wacky, greedy, huckster-dominated motivational pseudoscience existing outside these systems, serving people who don't obtain satisfaction from them?

A group of psychologists at the University of Michigan who are in the McClelland orbit did two national surveys, one in 1957 and one in 1976, to try to determine the general direction of the country, motivationally speaking. They found that among blacks and women both *n* Achievement and *n* Power increased dramatically—which could be seen as either a result or a cause of the civil-rights and feminist movements. The higher *n* Power, unfortunately, took the form of a “concern about maintaining status” rather than “having an impact on the environment.” Among men the picture showed lower *n* Affiliation and higher *n* Power—a “disturbing change” resulting from their response to the loss of unquestioned authority in the family and of security at work. “Men are watching pro football on TV,” David Winter says, disapprovingly. John Atkinson, who like Winter is a professor at Michigan, and who was McClelland's main collaborator on the earliest *n* Achievement studies, points with alarm to the spread of lotteries and casinos as evidence of the country's skewed motivational structure: gambling is popular only among the power-motivated, because achievement-motivated people like realistic, moderate risks. Atkinson believes that the United States may have peaked as an achieving society with its victory over Hitler, and has been declining ever since.

McClelland's position would be that a national commitment to motivational training could have stemmed this decline. It's true that lately all sorts of

programs with a motivational component have been introduced in schools and in offices, but most of them proceed from what McClelland would consider imprecise, untested, or downright erroneous assumptions. For example, the McClelland school doesn't think much of the idea that enhancing self-esteem will increase motivation, because it regards high self-esteem as nothing more than an uncontrolled power motive. What helps people most, McClelland believes, is learning to inhibit and channel their power motive while increasing their achievement motive.

Aside from his dealings with foundations and government agencies, McClelland's big chance to inject precise motivational measurement and training into the American personnel system was through his dealings with the Educational Testing Service, the organization in Princeton, New Jersey, that produces and administers tests used by the millions every year in school admissions, professional licensing, and employment. ETS was founded in 1948, just when McClelland was doing his pioneering work in the measurement of *n* Achievement. From the very beginning ETS knew how to measure one quality—“scholastic aptitude,” a predictor of grade-point average. Scholastic-aptitude scores were obtained through multiple-choice tests that could be mass-administered and machine-scored; they were highly reliable; and they could be easily validated by correlating scores with grades.

The president of ETS, Henry Chauncey, was interested in measuring many other qualities as well, and in the early years of ETS he spent a lot of time meeting with psychologists who might show him how to do so. Chauncey had some contact with Henry Murray, which wasn't very productive because Murray's work didn't seem translatable into measurement and training. That was where David McClelland's work

seemed much more promising. Starting in the early 1950s McClelland was in touch with ETS about the possibility of its measuring motivation.

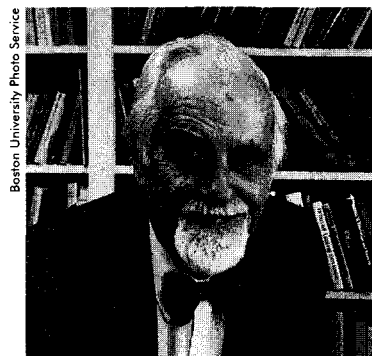
But McClelland's preferred test of motivation, the modified TAT, couldn't be given to hundreds of thousands of people on a single day and then quickly

scored. McClelland was not interested in helping ETS to produce a workable compromise—that is, a multiple-choice test of motivation. So ETS became a large influence in American society without McClelland's having much of an influence on it. In 1961 McClelland

broke ranks with ETS by writing an article in the Harvard alumni magazine decrying what he called, in its title, “The Stranglehold of Academic Performance on the Admissions Process.” If prestigious colleges functioned as the gateway to positions of authority in credential-oriented postwar America, he wrote, and if they selected their students solely on the basis of their grade-getting ability, then people with other abilities wouldn't be able to get positions of authority.

On Henry Chauncey's copy of the article is this handwritten notation: “He's flipped.” But Chauncey, an exemplar of the inhibited power motive, immediately wrote McClelland a couple of amiable letters of disagreement, insisting that college admissions officers do look at qualities other than scholastic aptitude and that ETS was continuing its search for ways to measure some of these qualities. He invited McClelland to come down to Princeton for a visit. McClelland, a little waspishly, replied,

I look forward to the time when ETS or some group will supply colleges with scores on other characteristics that may be relatively unrelated to academic success in college but very much related to success in later life. When you make these scores available to college admis-



David McClelland today

sions officers, my worries will be considerably diminished. However, at the present time, I think . . . a boy . . . who scores, say, between 550 and 600 on his SAT Math and Verbal examinations and below average in rank and class has about one chance in a thousand of getting into Harvard, *whatever his other abilities may be*.

A few years later McClelland decided to beard the lion in its den by delivering a lecture at ETS that criticized standardized testing in sweeping terms. He made a series of suggestions to reform testing: testing “competencies”—the ability to perform specific tasks—rather than aptitude; teaching people how to raise their test scores; designing tests so that people’s scores would rise as they learned more, rather than staying constant; abandoning multiple choice in favor of “operant response,” or answers produced by the test-taker; and changing the names of the tests to remove the implication that general aptitude or intelligence was being measured. Even more ambitiously, he envisioned a change in the overall purpose of tests, from selection to “evaluating educational progress”—which, by eliminating the need for annual rankings of millions of people, would mean that the existing tests of motivation could be included and used to shape the functioning of schools.

The lecture was published in the *American Psychologist* in 1973, and it got, McClelland says, “the most response of anything I ever wrote.” One part of the response was that a delegation from Yale came to see McClelland and asked him how the Yale admissions office could use his ideas. The leader of the delegation was Henry Chauncey Jr., the son of the president of ETS, who was a dean at Yale. The junior member was an undergraduate named Robert Sternberg, one of whose vivid childhood memories is of the humiliation of getting a low score on an IQ test in elementary school; he later decided to devote his life to reforming testing. (Today Sternberg is a psychology professor at Yale and a leading authority on broadening the definition of

intelligence.) McClelland wasn’t much help. “Our interest was, Are there any other measures that are ready and off-the-shelf? and he said no,” Sternberg says. McClelland remembers the meeting as having been another occasion for him to play the role of David-who-loses: “I said, You can’t fight city hall.” But this was the rare case in which McClelland’s disinclination to push his ideas did not hamper their influence. In recent years ETS has moved dramatically, at least in its rhetoric, in the McClellandesque direction of testing “performance” or “competency” rather than “aptitude,” and using questions that require written-out answers. Its biggest ongoing research project is the National Assessment of Educational Progress. This year it changed the name of its best-known exam from Scholastic Aptitude Test to Scholastic Assessment Test.

**I**N *Motivating Economic Achievement*, a book about the Indian motivational training course which McClelland wrote with David Winter, McClelland ended with a characteristic leap from tables of data about businessmen in Kakinada and Rajahmundry into an empyrean realm of intellectual ambition. He observed that during modern times the whole thrust of the history of ideas has been to make the fate of the individual appear to be “pre-determined.” Darwin showed that man “was a byproduct of a process of natural selection over which he certainly had no control”; Marx discussed “desires and aspirations as if they were wholly determined by economic conditions”; Freud added unconscious forces to the list of all-powerful, immutable shapers of people’s destinies. “Where in all this picture of social determinism,” McClelland asked, “was there a place for man as a creator rather than a creature, as an actor rather than a reactor, as an agent of change rather than a product of historical, social, and personal history?” He ended with the stirring, if grandiose, assertion that “scientific knowledge is the new God,” which could enable people to throw off the shackles of determinism and shape

their own destinies. In a sense McClelland here came full circle: the Methodist minister’s rebellious son finally embraced a kind of secular (though hardly modest) Methodism, in which motivational psychology would enable anyone to attain salvation in the form of success in American society.

Scoff if you want, but it’s a notion that has innate pull. In America nothing is more appealing than the idea (which sounds like a joke to most people from other countries) that anyone, at any point in life, can reinvent himself psychologically and socio-economically, simply by exercising mind-power. But is it really possible, or is it just a cruel delusion that leads people into Willy Loman-style agonies if they don’t become successful?

For the half of the country that goes to college, the higher-education system provides all those rogue American ambitions with a channel. It’s for people who are able to do very well in school between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five that the United States is most truly a land of opportunity.

A small subgroup of the rest are able to play out their ambitions successfully in the more chaotic atmosphere of the marketplace—as entrepreneurs, entertainers, and, yes, salesmen. These people are on what McClelland calls “a second success ladder based on money.” As a result, they don’t present a pretty picture: by most people’s standards they’re greedy. But they have made the American idea work for them.

Motivational psychology seems to hold the promise of another route through the American social structure. If motivation to succeed really were both measurable and teachable, it could help people for whom both high educational performance and bare-knuckles moneymaking are unattainable—people with different values, or inconvenient backgrounds, or unruly life trajectories. The benefits in individual happiness, social peace, and economic productivity would be worthy of serious national discussion. At the moment, however, about the only place such discussion occurs is on infomercials. ☛



# Kathleen's Engagement

by LYNN CARAGANIS



WEEK and a half after announcing her engagement, my best friend, Kathleen, brought Kyle over to meet us. At this time we still knew only one thing about him: he worked at Knott's Berry Farm. My husband, Mark, was pessimistic about it, because he thinks there's almost no chance an unmarried woman—divorced, in this case—who's past the age of twenty-two can meet a decent man. Inevitably she'll marry the other kind, and spend the rest of her life covering it up. So we won't know.

He was putting out glasses and ice and dip, all fixed that tidy way I'd found so jarring when we were first together. He wants to put everything in arrangements. I could never reconcile it with his love of smoking dope. This is a man from a really bohemian family—they'll tell you they had a cousin who was almost blacklisted before you even get through the front door!

I'm not talking about those clown-face platters with pimienta noses, such as, for example, Kyle may make—but I do mean celery sticks all arranged in a row according to their size and their color. Speaking of Kyle, by the way, Mark claimed he wears shirts with flapping short sleeves, and goes out and buys a new snowblower every two years. He couldn't possibly know this! Also, with no evidence whatsoever, he harped on what he called "the main disappointment of Kyle's life—that rejection by Mensa."



Kyle sure seemed  
to be crazy about her, and from her  
way of smiling back—ooh,  
I can't say it

"Kathleen will probably want to stay after he's gone home," he was saying.

"Why?"

I said "Why?" but was at that moment reading his mind. He imagined she would be so embarrassed by Kyle all evening that we'd have to have an hour with just the three of us, to make sure she understood we didn't think any less of her. Of course she was bound to make an occasional mistake in her desperate rush to marry someone like: himself! He thinks this is the desire of any woman he happens to think well of, and in fairness to him I will admit that all women think he is "ador-

able," and something about him makes them feel they can and *should* tell him so.

I threw up my hands. "You know he may be great! He may be perfect for her!"

"Yeah," he muttered in his preoccupied way over the celery. "We should try to keep an open mind. But she's always so lonely, and she's so good-natured—you just never know what kind of creep she'll drag in."

The doorbell rang at that second, as if to say, "I'll show you what kind!" It was twice as eerie since Kathleen always comes through the back door.

"Doesn't want Kyle to know about the back door," Mark said on his way past me. "I think she's regretting the whole business already."

I went quickly to the mirror to see if my hair looked all

right, and when I joined them they were standing staring up at an old brass sconce with a worn shade, as if it were a mysterious deity.

First I hugged Kathleen while she said, "Another one of your cheerful black outfits!" Then Kyle and I shook hands.

"I was just admiring your light fixture!" he said.

I wasn't about to laugh—well, that's not exactly true—so I said, "Oh, are you a . . . a sconce enthusiast?"

**K**ATHLEEN rolled her eyes at me. She was amused, though. Meanwhile, Mark was staring beadily at Kyle, who had an oval bald head. He was a normal-looking man—he looked somewhat like David Gergen.

Murmuring something, Mark lifted Kathleen's raincoat up off her shoulders, so I reached out for Kyle's.

He handed it over, and I took it back to the vestibule and slid it onto a hanger. Cooties? I couldn't be sure.

"Fantastic house!" I heard him exclaim as I joined them in the living room. "It really makes one think of the gracious old days, doesn't it, when they had plenty of servants and knew just how to live!"

"Thanks," I replied, seating myself next to him. The other two were on the couch facing us. Kathleen seemed happy, and Mark, I guessed, was going over in his mind what might be the best way to console her.

"Kathleen got lost coming back from the airport!" Mark said to me.

"I did," she said, shaking her head. "It's the fifth time I've forgotten the name of my own exit."

"It's Ridgefield," Mark said.

"I know it *now*," she said. "I'll know it next time. You know, I *thought* it was that, but it seemed so obvious that I thought, 'Of course you *think* it would be that, but it's so ob-

vious, it can't be.' That's how these things always happen to me."

"Your hair looks great, and that's the main thing," I said.

"Doesn't she have fantastic hair?" Kyle said. "That hair and that figure!" Kyle pretended to have an attack of the shivers. "Boy, the guy who could walk out on that!"

He'd called Kathleen "that." I couldn't help glancing over at Mark. He'd been gazing at her knee, perhaps musing on the terrible odds she faced, but now he sat up straight, as if he'd been punched in the stomach. I looked away, wondering if someday there'd be some horrible repercussion for Kyle.

Kathleen herself didn't seem bothered and only remarked that there's no accounting for people's tastes. And to really understand that, you have to know she mistakenly believes she has very mediocre looks. I laughed feebly, too weak to contradict her for the billionth time. Then we all chewed awhile on the celery. Kathleen eventually returned to the subject of the exit names, which she thinks are being changed all the time.

I said to Kyle, "I understand you work at Knott's Berry Farm," and he said, "Ah!" as if I were just about to win a grand prize.

"Yes, I manage the Good Time Theatre there at Knott's Berry Farm." He paused to swallow. "Do you know it? No? Kind of interesting how it happened. I took a job there in 1981, just to tide me over till the grad-school semester started. Guess what? I never made it to grad school!"

"Why not?" Mark said.

Kyle turned three quarters toward me and, slightly chewing, said that it was the only "family-type facility on the West Coast" that does something—can't remember, I guess, but I heard him say "family-type fun," too, which might be some kind of code for religious views—and then he concluded, "I guess I'm pretty proud of it, the way I go on!"

And then I came down on him for being ashamed of being proud of Knott's Berry Farm, because I am such a snob and I didn't want him to think he could read my mind. (And I'd been thinking, "Boy, you sure are proud of Knott's Berry Farm.") I pretty much said to him, "I may not like your shirt or anything, and I think you're boring, but by God, I'm no monster."

I caught Kathleen gazing at me, but it lasted only seven milliseconds.

So *then* I felt so guilty that I really threw negativity to the winds and said, in an encouraging voice, "Are you going to take Kathleen out there to see it?"

"Oh, nothing would please me more! Trish asks me if I'm taking you to the farm. I said nothing would please me more!"

## THE CELEBRITIES

Not themselves, but like photographs of themselves;  
and their faces, whether puffy, sleek, or wrinkled,  
are faces we cannot imagine anyone  
gazed at with love ever—because they are angels  
burned to fierce neutrality by the billion stares  
that make them immortal: great, impoverished beings  
sprung whole from the eyes of strangers.

—IRVING FELDMAN

He really looked like David Gergen in a happy mood as he reached over the crudités and put his hand on her knee for a moment. He sure seemed to be crazy about her, and from her way of smiling back—ooh, I can't say it. But I was filled with forebodings. Because, other than looking like David Gergen, he didn't seem like a real person to me. That's going to have to be my excuse.

"Want to come out and help me carry in things Mark already made?" I said to Kathleen.

"Now, that's a skill I'm going to need," she replied with a laugh. "Kyle's such a great cook!"

"Great!" I said, my heart still sinking, sinking down into my shoes. Clown faces made with olives. It seemed more plausible than ever! But you know what? It didn't even matter about that anymore. I felt the truth was so much worse.

**G**ETTING out to the kitchen, we found Mark's brother Carl standing there dripping rain on the floor. He must have come in through the back door, heard guests, and stood there wondering what to do, as he is very unsociable. It just so happens he has a crush on Kathleen, but that didn't keep him from neglecting to say hello to her or to me.

"I came to get that manual Mark borrowed from me."

"Oh, I think he's still reading it. Mark!"

"I can't help that. I need it back."

"Carl's here, Mark!" I yelled again, and then turned back. "Where's Carla?" (That's Carl's wife!)

"In the car."

"How's she been?" Kathleen said. All the rest of the people in the world have stopped asking that question because of the way, once introduced, it spreads out and engulfs time and space, just like the Blob.

"She hasn't any feeling in her left foot," Carl replied punitively. "None." Then he added, "People who are healthy all the time can't imagine what it means to be in a situation like Carla's."

That's Carl's way of saying to Kathleen, "I want your body, damn it."

But she actually managed a sympathetic response, and was even asking what the doctor thought it was, when Mark



entered with the book. "Word something something User's Guide . . . is this it?"

"Yes!" Carl said churlishly. "I'm going to need it myself from now on."

"Fine. Well, Kathleen's brought someone over, so we'd better all get back in there." He started and then turned back to his brother. "Or you can stay and have a drink if you want . . . there's plenty of liquor; no Moxie, of course. They

don't make it anymore."

"Moxie! I remember that!" Kathleen said suddenly, a far-away look in her eyes. I picked up the next relay of crackers: spirals all laid out perfectly in advance (not by me).

These things that happen between Mark and Carl are unpleasant, and often about Moxie, absurd as that is, because as a young teenager, before he knew he was going to be a famous psycholinguist, Carl used to drink it, thinking it was alcohol and that he was getting drunk. He would actually go downtown and stagger around!

I turned back to get Kathleen to come. I no longer wanted to trap her in the kitchen and force her to explain Kyle to me. Right then I felt there was enough unpleasantness in the world! Of course, I did still feel an unspeakable dread on her behalf, connected with Kyle. I also had to face the fact that she didn't seem curious about my opinion.

She was staring out the window above the sink. "Moxie! Something about Moxie! Wasn't it almost black?"

"I don't know," I said with a sigh. "It was a weird drink that made a big impression on everybody. I'm sorry Carl was rude. I'm sorry about it. You know the reason—the main reason, anyway." She laughed and said she realized that he was always mad about something or other. And suddenly I could feel it coming that she was about to say, "That's why I like Kyle so much!"

"That's what I appreciate about Kyle. You know, Trish, I've always picked the most demanding guys, and always felt it was up to me to soothe them, for some reason. I didn't even realize I was doing it. Till I met Kyle. You think he's too much the other way, don't you? Never mind. I could tell you didn't want to touch his coat!"

Boy. Horrible, unexpected feelings of shame invaded my being. I put down the tray. I said, "I didn't know him yet then."



She shook her head and started gazing out the window again.

"I just have the feeling I'm really not going to ever get married again."

"Course you will!"

"Ladies!" Mark exclaimed from the living room. "How 'bout those crackers! Not touching the arrangement, are you?"

"No, I won't," she continued. "You don't like him, and"—she laughed—"I just couldn't stand the strain of it!"

At that moment a smiling Mark reappeared beside us and whispered, "We were over looking at that scone again and we heard every word you said about Kyle. Just so you know!"

We rushed back into the living room. Kathleen gave a hug to the ever-cheerful Kyle and led him back to the couch, along the way inviting him to tell us about a project he was planning. I supposed it was some kind of new ride at "the farm," or a new "Las Vegas-type show," and I begged him to tell about it too, while simultaneously shoving the tray at him. I was ready to do practically anything to get him distracted from what he might have overheard. I wonder I didn't sit down on the other side of him from Kathleen and try to get him engaged to me, as well! (I know what he would have said, too: "Hey, aren't you married to Mike?")

He didn't want to discuss the project after all, though, because, he said, it would probably come to nothing.

"It's a book," Kathleen said. "He's an excellent writer."

"A book you're planning to *write*?" Mark said.

"I guess it sounds strange, after all that about my job, and being so involved out there. But it's true. At least it's something I think I'd enjoy trying."

"Kyle grew up in Michigan, and it would be a book all about Lake Huron, its history—economic history, mainly. And how neglected it's always been by the rest of the country. His father was a newspaper editor in a small town, so Kyle saw better than most people how it all happened."

"Amazing how we never even think about Lake Huron!" I said, still feeling a lot of guilt and anxiety.

"*Huron: The Quiet One*," Mark said in a dreamy voice.

"There's a lot of people hurting up there," Kyle remarked.

"How about a new Knott's Berry Farm for the place?" Mark said.

"Ha! I wish!"

"Would you take a leave of absence to write it?" I said in a riveted voice.

Kathleen said, "I've offered to keep him, but he refuses. Gee, I was ready to extend all kinds of privileges, too!"

I was groaning on the inside. Groaning! But on the outside we all laughed. I was looking at Kyle's bitten-down fingernails, but I was seeing the future. A monstrous foursome. Soon our names would be appearing in an article headed "KNOTT'S BERRY FARM NUPTIALS." Yes! And then Kyle, the opportunist twerp, would be turning his back on "the farm" and family values to move in with my friend, probably expecting her to buy him a word processor! Of course it had to happen that way. No way he'd let her move and give up her little firm that brought in so much money! Maybe he himself was a con man who'd never actually worked one day. He was probably from Lubbock, Texas, or something.

The snowblowing, family-values man with the flapping short sleeves now receded to a tiny point, while Kyle himself came rushing back, laugh on his face, fat cigar in his hand! At that moment Mark interrupted to say, "Macaroni and cheese ready, dear?"

That was a code, because we don't like the dish.

"Yes," I said, trying to gather my wits without showing how upset I felt. "I think dinner *is* ready, as a matter of fact."

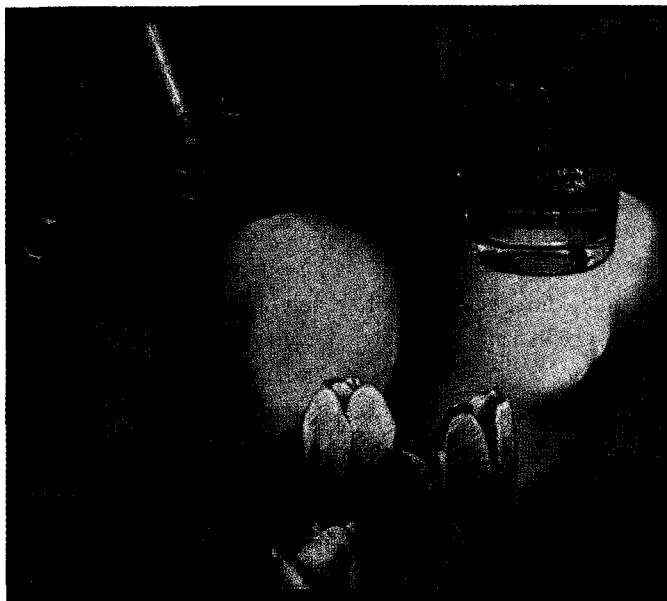
"Let me help carry things!" said our male guest.

Kathleen walked out beside me, telling me about her friend Ruthie who had had a nose job, claiming it was an operation for a sinus problem. "And when her friends see her, she'll have to say something like 'My nose feels so much better it actually *looks* better! Isn't that weird?'"

"But they won't think it looks better, because they think she just had regular surgery, don't you think?" I replied. I was interested, but also crushed by something else at

the same time, so I went straight to a kitchen chair and sat in it.

I looked at my hands in my lap. Kathleen was saying it was a subtle kind of change, they pulled in the nostrils a little bit, and I was listening but I was having a hard time. I was trying to bear a picture of my own future, when Kathleen would be all wrapped up in her own life, and I'd be the sole companion of Mark. ☞



# ***NPG Statement on Population***

## ***We Believe that the Optimum Rate of Population Growth is Negative***

We believe that the optimum **rate** of population growth for the United States (and for the world) is **negative** until such time as the **scale** of economic activity, and its environmental effects, are reduced to a level that would be sustainable indefinitely.

We are convinced that if present rates of population and economic growth are allowed to continue, the end result, within the lifetimes of many of us, would inevitably be near universal poverty in a hopelessly polluted nation and world.

We agree with Professor Herman Daly who has pointed out that the human economy is a subset of the biosphere, and that **the current scale of economic activity relative to the biosphere is already far too large to be sustainable indefinitely.**

### ***Stabilization Is Not Enough***

We believe that calls for merely slowing down rapid population growth, or for stabilizing population at present or even higher levels, **are totally inadequate.**

Such proposals, while presented as a solution, **fail to address the central issue:** how to create a national (and world) economy that will be sustainable indefinitely.

At present or at even higher levels of population, neither the application of science and technology, nor simplifying life-styles, nor any combination of the two, can offer any hope of reducing our impact on the environment to a sustainable level.

### ***We Need a Smaller Population***

We recognize that our impact on the environment in terms of pollution and resource depletion is the product of our numbers times our per capita consumption of energy and materials. Thus, there are only three ways by which that impact can be reduced:

- By reducing the size of our population by a negative rate of population growth.

- By reducing over consumption (in the United States and other developed countries) by simplifying life-styles.
- By reducing resource depletion and pollution per unit of consumption through more efficient use of energy and materials.

Population size is by far the most critical of those three variables. **Nevertheless, our present scale of economic activity is so large relative to the biosphere that all three measures are needed in order to reduce it to a sustainable level.**

### ***An Urgent Need***

Over 20 years ago, when our U.S. population was far smaller, (about 202 million, rather than our present 260 million), Professor John Holdren correctly saw the urgent need for a negative rate of population growth. At that time he wrote,

"...What is surprising...is that there is not more agreement concerning what the rate of change of population size should be. For given the uncertain, but possibly grave, risks associated with substantially increasing our impact on the environment, and given that population growth aggravates or impedes the solution of a wide variety of other problems...it should be obvious that the optimum **rate** of population growth is zero or negative until such time as the uncertainties have been removed and the problems solved."

### ***A Population Goal for Our Country***

We must have, first of all, a nationally-determined population goal for our country, accompanied by effective policies to achieve it.

We urge Congress and President Clinton to set, as a top priority national goal, **the achievement of a negative rate of population growth for the United States until such time as the scale of our economic activity is reduced to a sustainable level.**

We also call on our political leaders to urge other nations to pursue a similar goal.

***Please help us build broad public support for a national policy to achieve a negative rate of population growth.***

***NPG is a nonprofit, national membership organization established in 1972. We are the only organization that calls for a smaller U.S. and world population, and recommends specific, realistic measures to achieve those goals.***

***Contributions to NPG are tax deductible to the extent the law allows. As reported to the IRS on our most recent Form 990, our fundraising and administrative expense was only 13.3 percent of our total income.***

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Everett Collection

## David Lean's Magnificent *Kwai*

*A new video of the famous 1957  
film reveals the epic ambition, visual intelligence,  
and human depth of the director of  
Great Expectations, Lawrence of Arabia,  
and A Passage to India*

**W**HEN lecturing about the joys of Dickens, Vladimir Nabokov proclaimed, "Let us worship the spine and its tingle." Dickens's best movie interpreter, David Lean, realized early on that films should be spine-tingling. When he started out, as Noel Coward's collaborator on *In Which We Serve* (1942), and won international recognition for transforming Coward's *Still Life* into *Brief Encounter* (1945), he used highly charged staging and editing and a lucid, fluid realism to depict the contrast between ongoing life and life at its extremes. Lean came into his own with

tumultuous versions of Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1946) and *Oliver Twist* (1948), bringing to perfection a visceral, affecting style of visual storytelling—fabulous both in the sense of "fablelike" and in the sense of "terrific." With the spectacular adventures of *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957) and *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) he emerged as the resounding craftsman of the oversize screen. Just as CinemaScope and Panavision developed

by Michael Sragow



anamorphic lenses that "squeezed" images onto 35mm film and magnified them when they were projected onto the wide screen, Lean fashioned anamorphic epics that ran as long as three and three-quarter hours but expanded even further when they imprinted themselves on the viewer's brain.

Seeing *The Bridge on the River Kwai* again in today's movie context (it has just been reissued by Columbia TriStar Home Video) is both thrilling and sobering. It's thrilling because Lean wove a suspenseful tale while taking a complex attitude toward a significant subject—the military mentality. It's sobering because it depicts a Japanese warrior, a British officer, an American cynic, and a humanistic English medical man questioning one another's connection to reality, but the movie is itself far more "real" than any equivalent nineties blockbuster except Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*. In praise of the summer superhit *The Fugitive*, Roger Ebert declared that its director, Andrew Davis, "deserves comparison with Hitchcock and also with David Lean and Carol Reed." Actually, one would be hard pressed to find any of Hitchcock's wit, originality, and eros, Reed's empathy and lyricism, or Lean's dynamic film instinct and literary intelligence in *The Fugitive*. It's the kind of souped-up, formulaic action film, about a guy stalking a guy, that wrings cheers from a train wreck. (When a train is wrecked in *Kwai*, the reaction is stunned silence.) But it's startling that anyone should feel the need to invoke the movies of Hitchcock, Reed, and Lean as standards of excellence. After all, Britain's three Old Masters (along

with a fourth: Michael Powell) elevated their art by devising expressive techniques, by tackling daunting subject matter, by expanding the scope and sensual power of the movies. These days the advances that matter in mainstream moviemaking are in special effects.

The video release of *The Bridge on the River Kwai* is sorely disappointing. Even the "letterbox" edition (with black bars at the top and bottom of the tape, to imitate the shape of a movie screen) only approximates the wide-screen composition of the

Courtesy of Columbia Pictures and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences



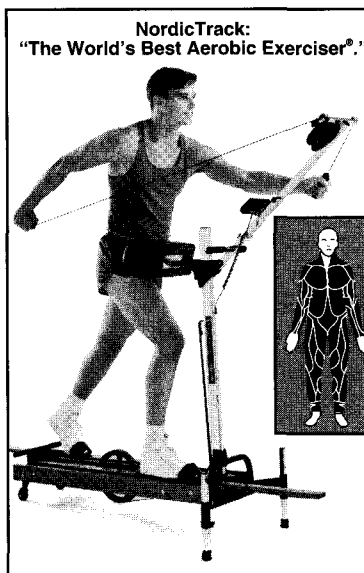
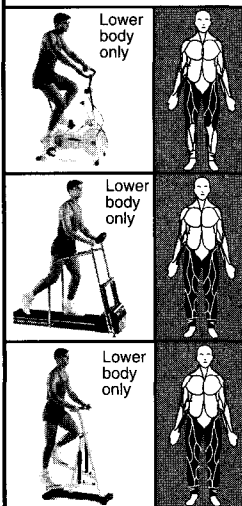
movie's CinemaScope images. About 10 percent of the visual information available on the negative has been lopped off; you don't need technical expertise to notice how the cropping slices off the sides of the frame and skews the pictorial balance. (For a dazzling example of ultra-wide-screen CinemaScope reduced to regular wide-screen CinemaScope and correctly transferred to video, see Disney's laser disc of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.) Those expecting visual rejuvenation like that of Lean's reconstructed *Lawrence of Arabia* (released in 1989) will be let down by the streaks and yellowy patches of this reissue. (The sound is rejuvenated—perhaps too much; a couple of spots are aurally hyperactive.) After previewing the reconditioned film at the video company's headquarters in Burbank, I asked why it wasn't up to *Lawrence* standards—and became part of a year-old debate sparked by the "new" *Kwai*'s premiere at UCLA. Spokespeople for Columbia and its restoration team insist that they did the best they could with the available material; critics contend that an outside expert like Robert A. Harris, who worked closely with Lean on reviving *Lawrence*, would have done a more creative and meticulous job. In any case, Columbia and its parent, Sony Pictures Entertainment, and other studios jumping on the "restored classic" bandwagon, should take the controversy as a signal to improve preservation and restoration standards and techniques.

Still, the letterbox *Kwai* allows viewers to appreciate the film's panoramic qualities and its nuances far more fully than they could in the standard "pan and scan" version, which reduces the original to TV's squarish proportions. Watching the movie again in its new video form, one realizes how Lean's Second World War tale of a British ramrod who holds his men together in a Japanese prison camp looks back to Jean Renoir's 1937 *Grand Illusion* (one of Lean's ten favorite films) and looks ahead to John Sturges's wonderful 1963 POW adventure, *The Great Escape*. The movie gains not just in breadth but also in subtlety, airiness, and humor. Take a brief, telling vignette:

The Japanese commandant stares at the camp parade grounds from a window during a rainstorm, while a native on his doorstep pulls a punkah in the manner of the courtroom fan-handler in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* (which Lean

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turned into his last brilliant adaptation, in 1984): "Pulling the rope towards him, relaxing it rhythmically, sending swirls of air over others, receiving none himself, he seemed apart from human destinies, a male fate, a winnower of souls." That much remains even in standard TV prints. But in the letterbox edition a Japanese soldier crouches at the lower left of the screen, shrinking away from the downpour; when the officer barks at him, he takes his usual post and leaps to attention, under a rainspout that sends water gushing onto his head. It's a quick satiric joke about Japanese discipline and an illustration of the officer's imperious character—and it's missing from the 1985 pan-and-scan copy, which fails to indicate why the commandant is barking. (The 1993 pan-and-scan copy cuts to the soldier after the commandant yells at him, smudging Lean's directorial wit.) Watching the letterbox film will remind older audiences and instruct younger ones that the wide screen can be used not just for jolts but for swift, forceful punctuation.

**I**N 1957 *Kwai* was a theatrical smash—it grossed ten times its \$3 million cost—and in 1966 its television debut reached some 60 million viewers. Yet the movie breaks every rule of today's Hollywood.

• *The story can't be summarized in one sentence.* Those who try get it wrong. It's often said to be about the snapping of a stiff-upper-lip Brit, Colonel Nicholson (Alec Guinness), in a Japanese POW camp on the Bangkok-Rangoon railway during the Second World War. Nicholson succeeds in facing down the brutal commandant, Colonel Saito (Sessue Hayakawa)—surviving days in a sunbaked box nicknamed "the oven"—only to become obsessive about having his men construct a bridge for the Japanese army.

The movie is scary and unsettling because of Nicholson's consistency, not his supposed craziness. His heroism always borders on officiousness. When he refuses to let Saito use British officers for

manual labor, some of those who applaud his stand on principle nevertheless question whether he should risk his officers' lives to protect their status. When he's put back in charge of the prisoners, he views the erection of the bridge as a means of restoring discipline, a morale-boosting task, and a monument to Anglo-Saxon craftsmanship. And Lean lays out evidence that Nicholson may be right. The men do act like soldiers instead of rabble when Nicholson and his staff take over. Even the token voice of reason, Major Clipton (James Donald)—the medical officer who grasps that Nicholson contradicts himself when he later compels officers to do manual labor and leads the sick and injured out of the infirmary for "light duties"—at one point applauds the culmination of the colonel's efforts.

The movie's screenplay has a mottled history. The blacklisted writer-producer Carl Foreman optioned Pierre Boulle's original novel *The Bridge Over the River Kwai* and wrote a script that he sold to the producer Sam Spiegel. Next Calder Willingham took a whack at it. Finally another blacklisted writer, Michael Wilson, put it into shape

with Lean's collaboration. At the time, Boulle, of all people, got script credit and an Oscar; the Motion Picture Academy honored Foreman and Wilson posthumously in 1985, and they receive credit on the new print. (Lean thought the award should have gone to Wilson and himself.) The script that emerged from this awkward gestation is sinewy and clear. When Nicholson adheres to legal principles and speaks of establishing a civilization in the middle of a jungle, he's like Sir Thomas More in *A Man for All Seasons* defending the legal system as protection from the devil. (Robert Bolt, the author of *Seasons*, became Lean's screenwriter on *Lawrence, Doctor Zhivago*, and *Ryan's Daughter*.) From the start the colonel has an answer for every doubting Thomas. He tries to prevent his men from attempting to escape—after all, the British high command ordered them to surrender, so escape might be considered treason. But this movie is tougher on its protagonist than *A Man*



Courtesy of Columbia Pictures, Records and Archives





for *All Seasons*. Nicholson's decisions have perilous repercussions for the Allies. The catastrophic climax reveals the inadequacy of his blinkered officer's mentality.

Most anti-war movies ask whether the end justifies the means. This anti-war movie asks whether the means justify the end. Command itself, divorced from civilian ethics and politics, exhilarates Nicholson. And he's so delighted to observe tangible results of his leadership—the cohesion of his men, the creation of the bridge—that he loses sight of the goal: defeating the Japanese.

• *There are no schematically defined heroes and villains.* Lean won't swerve from his objective attitude toward Nicholson; Saito; Major Warden (Jack Hawkins), the

head of the British commando team in charge of blowing up the bridge, a man who subjugates everything and everyone (himself included) to his mission; and an instinctive, opportunistic American named Shears (William Holden), who breaks out of the camp and is later coerced into volunteering for Warden's commandos.

Lean stages, shoots, and cuts the action to provide credible accounts of four perspectives, while insinuating a fifth one: an immutable nature that dwarfs human actions, represented by the sun that beats down on the compound, the rain that soaks it, the bats whose shadows speckle a terrifying killing scene, the eagle that soars above the jungle in the opening and closing shots.

Lean is both sympathetic toward and critical of each of the leading men—which means that today he'd be accused of Japanese-bashing, Brit-bashing, and Yank-bashing. Saito's samurai code is more understandable, or at least

more penetrable, than Nicholson's rule book. Underneath Saito's ruthlessness lie childlike fear, pathos, and insecurity. Lean cuts from the men celebrating Nicholson's release from the oven to Saito grinding his fists into his face and crying. Donald Richie once wrote that "native innocence" is what "accounts for the almost absurd atrocity of the Japanese at war, the Japanese at business." Saito eloquently embodies that paradoxical quality.

In the book Shears is the head of the commando team, and he's British. Critics have taken the Americanization of Shears in the movie as proof that Lean sometimes softened or vulgarized his material. It's true that the change enabled the filmmakers to cast a major Hollywood star, and Holden was then (as Lean said) "the top star in pictures." But it turned into an artistic improvement, because Lean and his collaborators thoroughly and imaginatively worked it out to buttress and enrich the narrative. As in Boulle's novel, the department of sabotage, Force 316, is a direct parallel to Nicholson's operation: another hyper-rational British group that emphasizes preparation over spontaneous inspiration and in the process misses the big picture. In the movie Shears, who wants nothing more than to bail out of the war, provides a constant, ironic counterpoint both to Nicholson and to the commandos. Sturges's *The Great Escape* can be seen as a positive restatement of the



social and moral dynamics of *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, down to the inclusion of an American loner, played by Steve McQueen, who does his own thing but is willing to help the group. In Sturges's movie the British officers are just as painstaking as Nicholson—but they use their organizational expertise to escape.

Lean's reworking of Shears strength-

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## Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") Can Israel survive without it?

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### What are the facts?

**The Root of the Conflict.** The conflict between Israel and the Arabs is not about borders and not about the Palestinians. It is about Israel's very existence. The PLO still adheres to its infamous "phased plan"; it calls for first creating a Palestinian state on any territory vacated by Israel and then using that state to foment a final allied Arab assault against the truncated Jewish state.

**The Importance of Territory.** Many believe that in this age of missiles, territory is of little importance. But this is not the case. The Arab states have acquired over \$50 billion of the most advanced armaments since the end of the Gulf War. And those are not just "conventional" weapons—

enormous

quantities of tanks, aircraft and much more. The Arab states possess large arsenals of chemical and biological

weapons, and all of them work feverishly on the development of their nuclear potential. All of those weapons have only one single target and one single purpose: the destruction of the state of Israel. And that goal is not being cancelled for any agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

For both "conventional" war and for war of mass destruction, territory and topography are critical for self-defense and deterrence. The mountainous territory of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") is

an indispensable line of defense. It totally controls access to Israel's heartland from the east. Israel needs this high ground for defense and to be able to peer deeply into enemy territory. The high ground allows Israel to detect missiles while they are still in the launch stage and to destroy them.

**Would the "West Bank" be demilitarized?** Even those who want Israel to retreat to her pre-1967 borders are agreed that the evacuated areas must be demilitarized. But that would be useless. Because the Palestinians will have thousands of trained soldiers, camouflaged as their police force. In case of war against Israel, these troops could be helicoptered in minutes to their positions, with armored forces reaching them within the same night. In any case, it is highly doubtful that the surrounding hostile

Arab nations would allow such a military vacuum to exist. And finally, there is the matter of terrorism. There are over fifteen

"Without Judea/Samaria (the 'West Bank') Israel would be totally indefensible; therefore, neither the purposes of Israel nor those of the United States are served by Israel's relinquishing control over the 'West Bank'."

Palestinian Arab terror organizations that neither Yassir Arafat nor any other Palestinian authority can control. There would be a constant rain of Katyusha rockets launched into the Tel Aviv area and into the entire coastal plain, which contains 80% of Israel's population and of its industrial and military potential. Ben Gurion airport, every incoming and outgoing flight, would be subject to mortar fire or shoulder-held Stinger attack. Does anybody doubt that the Arabs would not exploit that irresistible opportunity?

Without the "West Bank" Israel would be totally indefensible. That is the professional opinion of over 100 U.S. generals and admirals. Israel's strong defensive posture makes it most inadvisable for Israel's enemies to attack her. But once this defensive strength is removed, a coordinated war against Israel can only be a matter of time. The example and fate of Czechoslovakia, which preparatory to the Second World War was dismantled and shorn of its defensive capacity, insistently come to mind. What does all this mean to the United States? In a part of the world in which our country has the most far-reaching geopolitical stakes, Israel is the guarantor of American interests in the area. With Israel in a position of weakness the role of the United States in the area would collapse and radical states such as Syria, Iraq and Iran would dominate. That is why, despite the heady prospect of "peace in our time", neither the purposes of Israel nor those of the United States are served by Israel's relinquishing control over the "West Bank".

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ens the plot's suspense and continuity: the director cuts between the American's escape through the rain forest and Nicholson's struggle with Saito, and then between the commandos' race to the bridge and Nicholson's crusade to meet Saito's construction schedule. Of course, Shears is an extension of the POW that Holden played in Billy Wilder's *Stalag 17*—the wise-guy pariah who hides his fellow feeling. We're drawn to Shears's savvy and intuition, but he isn't as heroized as Holden's character in Wilder's movie. His own survival tactics put him on the spot: because Shears, an enlisted man, stole his dead commander's uniform (assuming that as an officer he'd win better treatment in a Japanese prison camp), the British are able to persuade the U.S. Navy to lend him to Force 316.

• *The people don't change for the better, and there is no happy ending.* Lean's characters are complicated from the beginning. Right up to the bitter finale his scenes are designed to draw them out through conflict, not to improve their morality. John Simon repeated a common criticism when he wrote, "Typically, Lean changed the movie's ending to something more upbeat than Pierre Boulle, hardly a profound novelist, had provided." Although Lean did alter the climax, it's scarcely more "upbeat." If Nicholson sees the error of his ways, he can't save himself or two of the commandos. And Lean adds a chilling touch that's not in the book: Warden's Siamese helpers (beautiful women here, not male partisans, as in Boulle) draw back in fear and disgust at the role Warden plays in his comrades' death. The marked difference between book and movie is that Lean destroys the bridge—a sight that's dramatically satisfying, but still horrifying when virtually all the leading characters lie dead.

SIMON spoke for others, too, when he said, "David Lean is altogether a strange case: a man afflicted with gigantism, who wants to make bigger and bigger movies, even though his small- and medium-sized ones are often very good, and his big ones tend to be disappointing." The director had the misfortune to take the stance of an omniscient creator at a time when the most passionate and gifted critics advocated more directly "personal" moviemaking. In 1965 Andrew Sarris wrote,

*Dr. Zhivago* is actually the third time around for the *Kwai* formula, or the best cinema that time and money can buy. Imperceptibly, David Lean has evolved into the middle-brow's answer to the late Cecil B. DeMille. . . . *Kwai* was strictly a man's picture, vague, allegorical, and ironic all at the same time. All the characters meant something, but the ending was unresolved because it was never established how Guinness managed to fall onto the dynamite, that is, intentionally or inadvertently. It didn't really matter, because all the characters were seen from the outside, and the main thing was displaying all the money that was being spent on the bridge.

But it's obvious that Nicholson does realize his mistake—he even asks himself, “What have I done?” before he moves toward the plunger that will detonate the explosives on the bridge. The tendency to portray blemishes in Lean's films as crucial flaws or to dismiss him as a movie-maker on the basis of one or two artistic failures increased from the mid-sixties on. In 1970 Pauline Kael declared,

David Lean makes pictures—like *Doctor Zhivago* and the new *Ryan's Daughter*—that consume years and involve enormous physical effort as well as enormous expense. As a director, he is a supertechnician. . . . Humorlessly meticulous, his epics have no driving emotional energy, no passionate vision to conceal the heavy labor. . . .

No driving emotional energy? No passionate vision? Even filmmakers known primarily for those qualities, such as Sam Peckinpah and Luchino Visconti, loved Lean's movies. Indeed, after seeing *Doctor Zhivago*, Visconti, according to his most recent biographer, murmured to a playwright friend, “Let's go upstairs and see it all over again, hiding, otherwise they [the intellectuals] will lynch me.” Hollis Alpert was accurate when he wrote, in his review of *Ryan's Daughter*, that Lean was

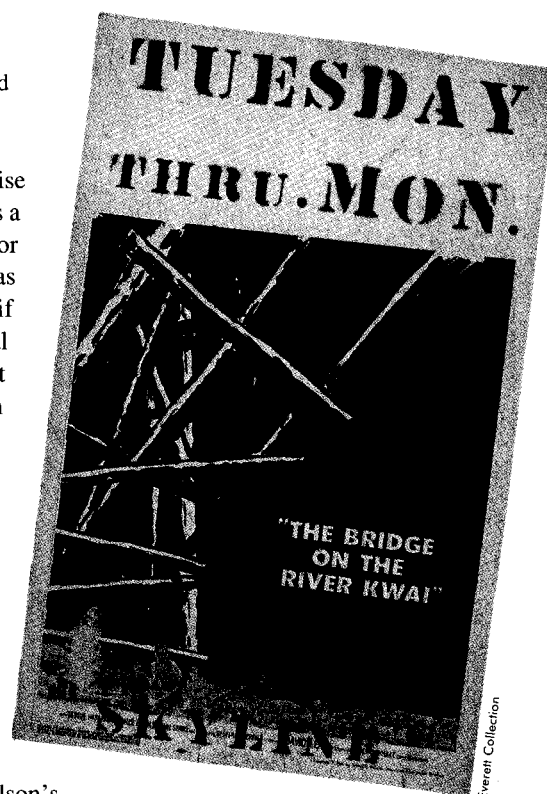
one of the world's most highly regarded directors, and one of its least. Millions have fond memories of such films as *Blithe Spirit*, *Brief Encounter*, *Great Expectations*, *Hobson's Choice*, *Summertime*, *The Bridge on the River Kwai* . . . , and *Lawrence of Arabia*. Academy Awards have been showered on his films and yet, in all the current flood of film books there is almost no mention

of Lean. When he is commented upon, it is invariably adversely.

Lean's “gigantism” deserves praise without apology. During his days as a film editor he earned a reputation for cutting such renowned sound films as *Pygmalion* and *49th Parallel* as if they were silents, providing musical rhythms and dramatic contrasts that were rare in British movies. When he began to direct spectacles, he made the same kind of leap: he composed in CinemaScope, Panavision, and Super Panavision as freely as he would have in regular 35mm, using every area of the huge frame expressively. The results in *Kwai* are often, well, spine-tingling. For instance, as Lean introduces the audience to Shears, who's burying an English soldier in the cemetery, Nicholson's troops progress toward the camp in a long, ragged ribbon across the top of the screen. They're like a squadron of wraiths—more fodder for Shears's shovel—and this impression increases the audience's and Holden's incredulity when they come marching onto the grounds in strict formation, whistling “The Colonel Bogey March.”

Throughout, Lean staged and shot the action for depth as well as width, often focusing divergent points of view within each frame, as when Nicholson and Saito glare at each other while Shears looks on from the sick bay. The movie never becomes static—partly because Lean was a master of both smooth and shocking camera moves, and partly because he knew when to cut in close to his marvelous actors.

No other epic stylist got better performances than Lean did in *Kwai*. Guinness is impressively adept at capturing Nicholson's combination of self-consciousness and self-delusion: though he's authoritarian, his eyes register his awareness of Saito's presence and his heartbreak over the self-sacrificing heroism of his men. Since everything Nicholson does even on normal days is a product of the will, his attempt to maintain a proper gait when he's summoned from his torture chamber is a devastating sight—one of the most robust and magical bits of acting Guinness has ever done. Holden is Guinness's equal, bringing an apposite,



intense physicality to his scenes; if he didn't receive commensurate acclaim, it's probably because Shears was a variation on other Holden characters. And Hayakawa is a fascinating camera subject, conveying the seams in an evasive yet emphatic personality.

Although Lean regained much of his critical stature with the release of *A Passage to India* in 1984 and the re-release of *Lawrence* five years later, it is filmmakers of all types and generations who have preserved his reputation—the fellow storyteller of the old school Fred Zinnemann (*From Here to Eternity*), the grand eccentric John Boorman (*Hope and Glory*), and the provocateur Brian De Palma, whose profound, maligned Vietnam movie, *Casualties of War*, paid tribute to *Kwai*. There was a fringe of condescension to the critical reception of *A Passage to India*, as there usually is when filmmakers aim both high and wide—when they try to bring the pleasures of literary art and entertainment to the largest possible audience.

In the wake of his deserved accolades for *Schindler's List*, Spielberg said, “If my mojo's working I can put one tenth of a David Lean image on the screen.” In the nineties the post-*Schindler* Spielberg could become Lean's heir: “the middle-brow's answer to the late Cecil B. DeMille.” Otherwise, those who enjoy the engulfing sweep that Lean once delivered must settle for a no-brow extravaganza like *The Fugitive*. ☞



## Recognizable Characters

*New software helps deliver on an elusive promise of the computer era: the paperless office*

**T**HE dawn of the computer era promised us a paperless world, in which everything we needed—memos, reports, even newspapers and books—would be available on a video terminal. Our file cabinets would contain only B.C. (before computer) documents, and we would once again be able to see the surface of

our desks, on which would be only a terminal and a phone.

But, as anyone who works in an office knows, the haystacks of paper have proliferated. Studies have shown that paper waste has increased since printers made long documents so easy to pump out. Finally, though, two innovations, long promised and for the

first time really practical, have brought us very close to the paperless world.

The kingdom of personal computers is divided into two great domains: "character-oriented" and "graphics-oriented" systems. This division lies beneath the more familiar ways of classifying computers—for instance, the Macintosh family versus that of IBM-compatible computers, or, within the IBM-compatible world, Windows versus DOS. Character-oriented systems (DOS is the best known) treat the screen as if it were an endless roll of typing paper and the computer itself as if it were a very sophisticated typewriter. In graphics-oriented systems (Mac and Windows) the screen is an animated display, like that of a video game, and the user can jump around to control different parts of the screen with a joystick or mouse.

Without graphics displays it would be difficult to use drawing programs or manipulate fancy fonts. But these advantages come at a tremendous cost in efficiency. On a standard character-based computer

**by James Fallows**



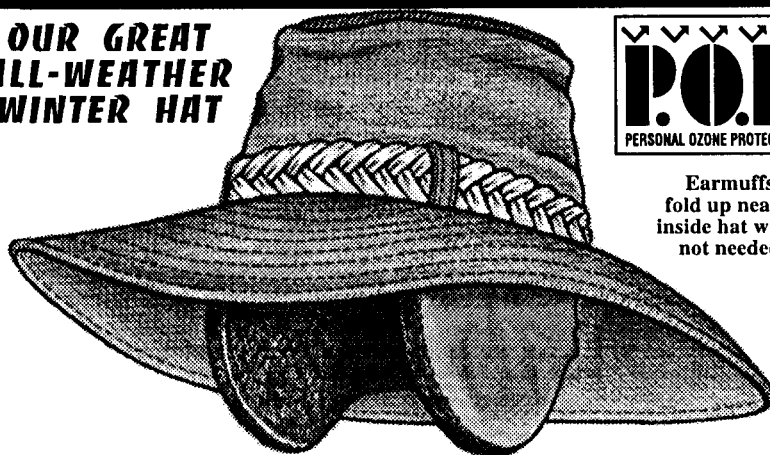
screen, like that for the original WordPerfect or Lotus 1-2-3, no more than 2,000 characters are visible at a time. It takes eight bits of computer data to specify each character; therefore, with 16,000 bits of information the computer can update the entire screen display. Any computer can do this almost instantaneously, which is why it was impossible to out-type the display even on the original IBM PCs, now thought of as lumbering dinosaurs. With IBM-compatible graphics displays the computer needs to specify each dot, or "pixel," on the screen, with eight, sixteen, or even twenty-four bits of data per dot—in effect drawing each character anew rather than calling it up from a video memory bank. The high-resolution display I now use (an XGA-2) has about 800,000 pixels, each separately controlled with sixteen bits of data. Keeping this screen display current with the computer's activity requires about 800 times as much computing power as the original PCs required. It is only the advent of high-speed processing chips and video accelerators that has made graphically oriented systems like Windows and OS/2 feasible.

Most of what people create on computers is character-based—that is, it consists of letters or numbers—and you usually have to print it to get it to other people. (The main exception is electronic mail.) Now I have found ways to use computers to cut down on two of the most annoying forms of paper in the modern office: sheaves of greasy-feeling paper curling out of the fax machine, and piles of clippings from newspapers and magazines. Fax-handling systems in the first case and "optical character recognition" (OCR) programs in the second have improved enough to be practical alternatives to normal paper storage.

**M**ODEMS that can send and receive fax signals (in addition to handling normal data streams) have been on the market for about five years. The big drawback of early models was that they monopolized the computer's attention: if the computer was transmitting a fax, it couldn't do anything else. The release of Intel's SatisFAXtion board, in 1990, represented the first significant step through this barrier. The board contained its own processing chip, which allowed it to send faxes, or automatically answer the phone and receive them, without disturbing whatever

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other program the computer was running. Intel has now released a full line of Satisfaxtion boards, ranging in price from \$100 to \$270, depending on transmission speed and other features. The Intel boards also include built-in modems, with speeds ranging from 2,400 baud for the less expensive models to 14,400 baud. (Three years ago I bought the 2,400-baud model for \$199. If I were buying a new board now, I'd get the Satisfaxtion 400, which offers a 14,400-baud modem and a 14,400-baud fax, for \$270.) Several other manufacturers offer comparable products.

Even after the Satisfaxtion board solved the hardware problem, a software problem remained. The FAXability software that came with Intel's board let you view received faxes on your computer's screen, printing them only if you chose to, but it could do very little else. In the past two years this gap has been filled by several excellent fax programs. I use FaxWorks OS/2, produced by SofNet, in Atlanta (800-329-9675), which also makes a Windows version, called FaxWorks PRO. Other leading programs are WinFax PRO, from Delrina (800-268-6082), and Eclipse Fax, from Phoenix Technologies (800-452-0120).

There are slight variations among these programs. I prefer FaxWorks OS/2, despite sometimes slow and surly responses from the technical-support staff, because it is exceptionally crash-proof and stable. Not once, in nearly two years of use, has the program failed or caused my computer to "hang." But the other programs, especially WinFax PRO and FaxWorks PRO, offer more-sophisticated commands for viewing and editing faxes; they are also cheaper, at less than \$100 versus about \$140 for FaxWorks OS/2.

One great convenience of these programs is "virtual printing." In effect, this allows you to send anything from your computer to be printed on someone else's fax machine, wherever it might be. On most personal computers the printer is connected to the parallel port, usually called LPT1. These fax programs create an imaginary printer, which you assign to an imaginary printer port—usually LPT3. You tell your word-processing or database program to send a print job to LPT3, and then indicate, on a series of FaxWorks screens, the phone number to which the fax should be sent. The result can often be crisper-looking when it ar-

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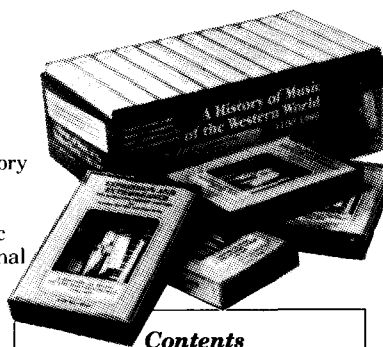
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rives as a fax than if you had actually printed the pages and sent them through a normal fax machine. This is especially true if your real printer is not a high-resolution laser printer. Most fax programs offer ways (sometimes for a slightly higher price) for the imaginary printer to emulate the fonts and resolution of laser printers when transmitting a fax.

Sending even a very long fax this way involves just a few seconds' effort rather than the annoyance of printing out a long document and feeding pages into a fax machine. The transmission can be scheduled for times when you're not there, or when the phone rates are low.

The other crucial feature of these programs is their ability to receive faxes without your having to print them out, thereby moving closer to the paperless-office ideal. Whether you actually use the programs this way will depend on how good a screen and display card you have. A bottom-of-the-line VGA screen offers screen resolution of 640 x 480 pixels; most faxes are hard to read and unpleasant to look at on such a screen. If you buy a new system, get one with a resolution of 1,024 x 768 pixels. At that resolution it is realistic to deal with most faxes in a paperless way—reading them, responding, printing out the few faxes you need to save, and erasing the rest from the disk. The lowest screen resolution at which you should think of using fax software this way is 800 x 600 pixels, that of the standard Super VGA screen.

Today's fax programs also let you manipulate the faxes that come in—filling in boxes, typing annotations and replies, copying text or pictures from one document to another. FaxWorks PRO, WinFax PRO, and Eclipse Fax have elaborate, Macintoshlike drawing tools, but even the simplest of these tools raise a disturbing possibility. As soon as you have used them, you realize that you can never trust any faxed, photocopied, or laser-printed document again. Using these programs you can forge copies of canceled checks, by copying signatures or numerals from one check and inserting them on another. You can invent or alter receipts in ways no one could detect. You can remove the word "not" from one part of a letter or contract and put it somewhere else. You can make inconvenient words disappear from a quotation. I have done all these things, for sport. There is no turning back

from technology, but these programs make you remember to be on guard.

The fax programs work, of course, only when your computer is turned on. To receive faxes, therefore, you must either leave the computer on all the time or switch to a regular fax machine when the computer is off. (I turn my computer off at night, and my monitor off when I'll be away more than five or ten minutes. Many people think they should always leave the machines on, to avoid the start-up surge of power that can damage chips. The disadvantage of this approach is needless wear on the hard drive, which spins constantly while the computer is running and will eventually wear out. Realistically, most computers become obsolete before either the chips or the hard drive fails. Therefore you might as well save power by turning off the computer when you can. Monitors consume a lot of electricity, and it's better to turn them off than to run a "screen saver" when you're away.)

**F**AX programs may receive handwritten documents, pages from books, and signed contracts, but they are not designed to send anything not directly generated by your computer. There is a way around this limitation, but it involves an expensive piece of hardware: a scanner.

Scanners come in two varieties, hand-held and flatbed. Each captures an image from a page, much as a photocopy machine does, and stores it in your computer. The hand-held models are cheaper, ranging from \$100 to \$300 versus at least \$700 for a good flatbed model. Their reliability has also improved in the past year, with new models that make it easier to scan in a straight line. Still, I regard all hand-held scanners as a waste of money. If you're interested in scanning, wait until you're ready to invest in a flatbed model—from Hewlett-Packard, Microtek, UMAX, or other manufacturers. I bought a Hewlett-Packard ScanJet IIp almost two years ago for \$900. It was a big investment, but having taken the plunge, I find that I use the machine several times a day.

A scanner can be used with a fax board to turn it into a full-service fax machine: you can scan a book page or any document into the computer, and then send it out as a fax. It can serve as a Rube Goldbergish replacement for a photocopying machine: you can scan the document and then print it. It lets you copy drawings or

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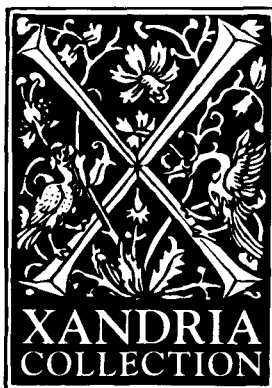
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logos and include them on stationery. And it makes possible the miracle of OCR.

Until about two years ago optical character recognition was less a miracle than a hoax—or, more charitably, a dream. The premise of such programs was that they could reverse the character-to-graphics transformation that takes place when you print a document. You would put a printed page into your scanner and the OCR program would convert its image into a normal text file. From the thousands of dots that make up a newspaper page, you could distill words and sentences—which you could then edit, save, index, and store like any other file.

Through the 1980s this process worked about as well as programs for checking grammar or translating English into Japanese—that is, very poorly. Obstacles that human readers would surmount without noticing—blurry type, run-together letters, unusual fonts—brought the OCR programs to a halt. That is not true anymore.

The first significant breakthrough came a year ago, with a modest program called TextBridge, from Xerox Imaging Systems (800-248-6550). This is a bare-bones program, offering only a few rudimentary commands and costing less than \$100, but it was noticeably more accurate—and unquestionably more affordable—than most commercial predecessors. Before TextBridge, most OCR programs attained accuracy rates of 90 to 95 percent. This sounds impressive until you realize that it means four to eight errors in an average line of type. In practice OCR is useful only when the accuracy rate approaches 99 percent, as it seems to with TextBridge.

The two best-known OCR programs are WordScan Plus, from Calera Recognition Systems (800-224-0660), and OmniPage Professional, from Caere (pronounced "care"; 800-535-7226). Both programs offer more refined controls than TextBridge does. For instance, they can save text in a variety of popular word-processing formats, and they make it easier than TextBridge does to check characters the program may have misrecognized. They are also more expensive than TextBridge. The list prices for Calera and Caere products range from \$295 to \$695, depending on features; the "street prices," from mail-order houses, are about a third less. Each program claims to be faster than the other, depending on the circumstances; in practice both

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are fast and accurate enough to make OCR worthwhile.

The other notable OCR program I have encountered is CharacterEyes, from a small Jerusalem-based company called Ligature Software (617-238-6734; 800-888-0060). The program was originally designed to perform OCR on Hebrew. It now supports the character sets of all Western languages, and when working on English it is as fast and accurate as the Calera and Caere products. All the OCR programs mentioned here are designed to work under Windows 3.1 but also run under OS/2 2.1, which I use.

When I first bought WordScan Plus, someone who worked at Calera informed me that text recognition is "an art, not a science." This was not the kind of comment I was used to hearing about the 0-or-1 binary world of computing, but I now understand what he meant. You learn after a while that certain kinds of text lend themselves well to OCR, and other kinds do not. Articles from *The Wall Street Journal*, for instance, always come through with 100 percent accuracy (to speak only of typography). I no longer even bother to try articles from *The Washington Post*, because they'll be riddled with (OCR) errors. For some magazines, especially those on shiny stock, humble TextBridge still does the best job. I've become acutely sensitive to the difference between run-of-the-mill faxes and those sent at "fine" or "high resolution." High-res faxes work very well with OCR programs; standard faxes don't. (The leading fax programs all offer OCR options—in some cases for an extra cost of \$20 to \$60. The option lets you convert incoming faxes into text—a process that is also much more successful with high-resolution transmissions.)

Having learned some of its art, I now have such faith in OCR's powers that every few days I feed a pile of newspaper clippings into the scanner and convert them to text, which I can store in my computer and eventually fish out when I need to, using a powerful indexing program like Agenda or Magellan. I've convinced myself that the whole cycle of storing and finding information goes much faster this way than if I slapped the clippings into file folders to be thumbled through (or lost) later on. Now my office is free not only of fax paper but also of the previously omnipresent clippings. And I have more fun. ☎

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### **CHURCHILL**

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**N**EARLY thirty years after his death Winston Churchill remains a curiously problematic figure. To his hagiographers and to votaries of the Churchillian cultus he was the greatest man of his age (in extreme versions, of all time), and he is still an icon venerated by British politicians and American columnists. But that only makes it harder than ever to come to terms with him. He overshadowed more than half of a century, his career taking on that eerie quality that extreme longevity brings. A man who entered politics under Queen Victoria retired as Prime Minister under Queen Elizabeth II, fifty-five years later; Church-

ill was elected to the House of Commons the year before President William McKinley was assassinated, in 1901, and was still sitting there the year after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, in 1963. He held ministerial office on and off for almost fifty years; he played a large part in the first great war of the century; he led his country through the second. Not content with making history, he wrote it, producing great multivolume histories of both wars, among scores of other books. Yet he remains hard to grasp and categorize. A question once asked about George Bernard Shaw (one of the "Great Contemporaries" in Churchill's book of that name, as it happens) applies to Churchill also: He was a great something, but a great what?

There has been no concerted and scholarly attempt to re-evaluate Churchill until recently. For one thing, "revisionism" was discredited by the work of writers including David Irving—unquestionably a clever and industrious researcher, but one whose undisguised fascist sympathies make it hard to take seriously his attacks on Churchill. For another, reappraisal was inhibited by the monumental (not to say sepulchral) official life, begun by Churchill's son Randolph and completed by Martin Gilbert. That book is more of a chronicle than a biography, still less a work of art; the best thing about its immensely informative but uncritical and unreflective eight volumes, and especially their documentary companion volumes, is the quarry they provide for other historians.

Maybe the first worthwhile fresh look was *Churchill: A Study in Failure* (1970), by Robert Rhodes James, a former clerk of the House of Commons and then for sixteen years a Tory MP. But even that book is qualified by the dates in the title:

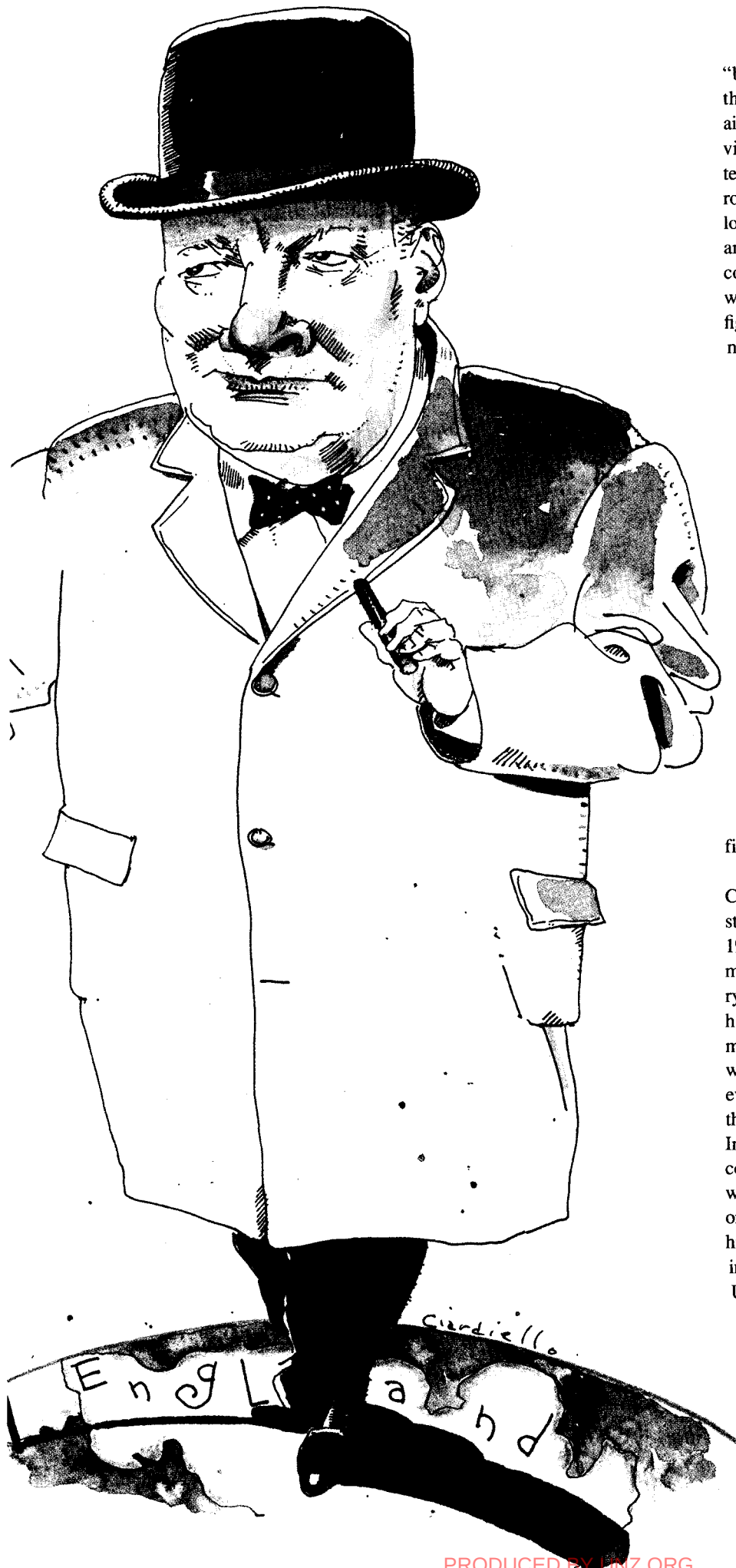
"1900–1939." It examined, that is to say, the very checkered career that Churchill had until he was sixty-five. The Churchill myth held that he was a giant kept down by pygmies in the "wilderness years," when he was out of office from 1929 to 1939. Rhodes James's book explained better than any other just why up until—and notably throughout—the 1930s he was so widely seen as at best a brilliant failure and at worst an untrustworthy charlatan. It nevertheless looked forward to the apotheosis of 1940, when, at the moment of England's, and Europe's, greatest peril, Churchill at last became Prime Minister and, in A.J.P. Taylor's simple and eloquent phrase, "the saviour of his country."

This was the accepted orthodoxy, fleshed out sometimes in hack biographies and sometimes with much greater distinction. One of the first and most distinguished was Isaiah Berlin's essay "Winston Churchill in 1940" (which appeared—as "Mr. Churchill"—in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1949, and is reprinted in Berlin's collection *Personal Impressions*). No one doubted the greatness, and the rightness, of Churchill in that summer of 1940 at least. Until now. John Charmley's huge biography caused a violent controversy when it was published in London early last year, thanks mostly to a few pages. Charmley questions just what was the previously unquestioned—the wisdom of Churchill's conduct during the "finest hour" of his own phrase and of national myth.

On May 13, 1940, Churchill made his







“blood, toil, tears, and sweat” speech to the Commons: “You ask, What is our aim? I can answer in one word: Victory — victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror; victory, however long and hard the road may be.” Fifteen days later, when it looked as though a large part of the British army might be lost, he told his Cabinet colleagues almost casually, “Of course, whatever happens at Dunkirk, we shall fight on.” This meant that there would be no compromise with Hitler, rejecting in advance any negotiated peace. And for this Churchill has been universally praised. Charmley disagrees. He points out, correctly, that there were numerous people in the higher ranks of the British establishment who doubted whether the victory that Churchill looked for was feasible (and plenty of Americans also, beginning with the ambassador in London, Joseph Kennedy). After the fall of France some thought that a negotiated peace was the rational course: “There was a good deal of support for the idea of at least opening talks to find out what Hitler’s peace terms might be.” Charmley takes the side of those who expressed doubts about fighting on for “victory at all costs.”

There are two distinct points here. Charmley is quite right to try and understand how the situation seemed in May of 1940 to those there at the time. This is no more than to follow the first rule of history, laid down by the greatest of English historians, F. W. Maitland: always remember that events now long in the past were once in the future, and interpret those events in terms of how people expected them to turn out, rather than how they did. In that summer very few people indeed could have foreseen what the next years would bring: that the British would hold on and that Hitler would gratuitously bring his doom on himself by invading Russia in June of 1941 and declaring war on the United States six months later. But there is more to it than this. Charmley turns out to be grinding a large ax, right-handed. For him, victory was not only unpredictable, it was barely desirable: the outcome of the war was in many ways politically disastrous for England. Even this point has been made before. In his *English*

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*History 1914–1945* (published in 1965, the year of Churchill's death), Taylor quoted the "victory at all costs" speech and added ironically,

This was exactly what the opponents of Churchill had feared, and even he hardly foresaw all that was involved. Victory, even if this meant placing the British empire in pawn to the United States; victory, even if it meant Soviet domination of Europe. . . .

For all that, Taylor did not accuse Churchill of betraying his country and his party by precipitating the end of the empire and the eclipse of established society. This is Charmley's theme, and he is joined in his lamentations by others. Alan Clark was himself a Tory Minister until he retired from politics at the 1992 election. He thinks that "the war went on far too long, and when Britain emerged the country was bust. . . . The old social order had gone forever. The empire was terminally damaged. . . . needless abasement endured." Clark means abasement to the United States, which is very much the villain of Charmley's piece; the tone of his book may be judged by one of his attempts at phrasemaking, in which the British surrender at Singapore "to an Asiatic [*sic*] race was one which did more to undermine the British Empire than any-thing except the Americans."

As A. E. Housman would have said, there is much here that is true and much that is new, but what is true is not new and what is new is not true. The fact that the war rapidly accelerated social and political change in England—as all wars do, in all countries—has always been obvious; likewise the fact that it accelerated the very "liquidation of the British Empire," over which Churchill had publicly vowed not to preside; and likewise the way in which it accelerated the replacement of Great Britain by the United States as the global great power, with the Americans ruthlessly stripping British assets as their part of Lend-Lease. But as for compromise peace in 1940, if the question of what Europe under permanent National Socialist domination would have been like is too namby-pamby for Charmley, he must be expected to ask another.

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of Austria, in March of 1938, Hitler said emotionally, "I will never forget this. . . I shall stick to him, whatever may happen, even if the whole world be against him," and actually kept this promise). Hitler told the Western Powers that he had made his "final territorial demands in Europe," and then went on to conquer half a dozen more countries. In August of 1939 he made a solemn nonaggression pact with Stalin, and two years later he invaded Russia without warning. For all Hitler's protestations that he wished England well, what reason would there have been to trust him after a peace was made?

This essentially pointless controversy is doubly a pity, because it hampers the real task of reappraising Churchill. To attack his reputation at its most invulnerable point is to deflect better-justified criticism of the rest of his career, much evidence for which Charmley convincingly presents. Churchill believed that he was a great national leader, and he was right. He demonstrated a particular kind of genius during a few months in 1940, which are brilliantly described in John Lukacs's book *The Duel* (1990). Even

then there was a sleepwalking quality to his performance. As he himself said to the Russian ambassador Ivan Maisky, who asked him on July 3 what his general strategy was, "My general strategy at present is to last out the next three months." So he did, and it was his greatest achievement.

But before and after that summer he also believed that he was something else, a great strategist; and that was against all evidence. He was in truth the worst kind of amateur general. From beginning to end of both great wars, Churchill was besotted with shortcuts and backstairs approaches, which threatened disaster and sometimes led to it. He was blamed, and rightly, for the Gallipoli fiasco in 1915. In 1940-1945 his schemes were continually harebrained: for bringing Turkey into the war, for invading Norway. All of this is excellently analyzed by Tuvia Ben-Moshe, an Israeli scholar. He shows how Churchill's dogged insistence brought about the most disastrous "backstairs" of all: the "Mediterranean strategy," which bogged the British and the Americans down in an interminable cam-

paign in Italy and postponed by at least a year the essential invasion of northern Europe.

Even now the mind reels at the folly of fighting all the way up Italy from the south: the Allies landed in Sicily in early July of 1943, and they were still fighting in northern Italy when the war ended, nearly two years later. This reluctance to engage the enemy in frontal battle had a somber explanation, as Ben-Moshe shows. He does not deal with what was in many ways the worst decision Churchill took, or at any rate acquiesced in: the "strategic bombing" offensive that destroyed the cities of Germany and killed 600,000 civilians without appreciably shortening the war. But he does discuss, better than almost any other writer, what lay behind so much of Churchill's strategy: a sense of British decline, and growing doubts about the fighting quality of British soldiers. This was not without reason; it has to be said that when the Wehrmacht met the British army on anything like equal terms, from start to finish of the war, the Germans usually came out on top.

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THROUGHOUT his life and politics Churchill's relationship with the British people was complicated and less than consistent. In his 1949 essay *Isaiah Berlin* valiantly argued that the "strength and coherence of his central, lifelong beliefs" were always visible, but this idea has to be measured against his extraordinary political career, beginning as a Tory, shifting to the Liberals (just in time for their decade-long tenure of office in 1905–1915), allying himself with Lloyd George and other radicals, returning sheepishly to the Conservative fold after the Great War, and then becoming a militant anti-Bolshevik and an opponent of self-government for India. Churchill himself maintained, with a shadow of plausibility, that he had all his life been a "Tory Democrat"—the phrase coined by his father, Lord Randolph Churchill—and Free Trader, whatever party labels he had worn.

And yet Paul Addison's study of his career in domestic politics shows the limitations of this subtle self-flattery. As a Liberal Minister before 1914, Churchill was undoctinaire, but flirted with the left of the party and the "New Liberalism." (This phrase marked not only a departure in British politics but also the beginning of a semantic shift by which the word "liberal," which in nineteenth-century European parlance had denoted minimal government and laissez-faire, came in twentieth-century, notably American, usage to mean the opposite.) Churchill was all his life a mixture of ruthlessness and chivalry, and as a busy interventionist Home Secretary in 1910–1911 he firmly upheld the death penalty while he worked to improve appalling prison conditions, as well as dabbling in some of the less pleasing aspects of Edwardian progressivism, such as an enthusiasm for eugenics and for sterilizing the feeble-minded. The truth was that "Tory democracy" meant a mixture of demagoguery and paternalism, which suited Churchill very well. Sometimes, before 1914, he did what he thought was best for the people; sometimes, in 1942–1943, he suspected that the people had let him down; in either case it was the condescending benevolence of a patrician.

Or would-be patrician. George Orwell once observed that—although the grandson of a duke, a Harrovian, and a hussar—Churchill wasn't a gentleman. Ducal or not, even his family history wasn't particularly savory. As John Charmley says, the

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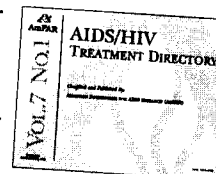
Churchill family motto, "*Fiel Pero Desdichado*" ("Faithful but unfortunate"), has been singularly inapt from the time when the first duke switched allegiance from James II to William of Orange, and prospered as a result. And in the first of an outstandingly good collection of essays edited by Robert Blake and Wm. Roger Louis, the product of a conference held in Austin in 1991, David Cannadine quotes Gladstone: "There never was a Churchill from John of Marlborough down that had either morals or principles." For anyone who wants to understand Churchill better, this is the book to read. Most of the twenty-nine essays are intelligently respectful; an exception is Sarvepalli Gopal's "Churchill and India," which shows how pigheaded and patronizing Churchill's attitude always was to "these primitive but agreeable races" whose destiny it was to be ruled by England "for their welfare and our own"—right up to Indian independence, which he was still denouncing in 1947.

Even with the admiring tone of the other essays, a picture emerges of a man who, though truly great, was flawed and often less than admirable. In many small ways his life was dubious, sometimes shocking. Take Churchill and money, which should be the subject of an essay in the Austin collection but isn't, and about which Charmley offers considerable new evidence. Winston's son and original biographer, Randolph, began his memoirs by saying facetiously that he was born to "poor but honest" parents. "Poor" is absurd except by the standards of the rich: a son of a younger son would have had no "portion" even if the dukes of Marlborough hadn't been so profligate. "Honest" is almost as arguable. Churchill needed an income, and he made one very successfully, whether through ministerial office or journalism, both of which were far more rewarding in real-money terms before 1939 than they are now. The Home Secretary's salary of £5,000 eighty years ago was worth about five times as much as his salary today. As for writing, the figures are startling. We all know the figures for General Colin Powell's or Lady Thatcher's memoirs, but how about an advance of £10,000 in 1929—worth well over \$500,000 today—for a historical biography like Churchill's *Marlborough*? Or an annual retainer of £7,800 (say, \$390,000) for a weekly article in the *Daily Mail* in the early 1930s? Or £300 (say, \$15,000)

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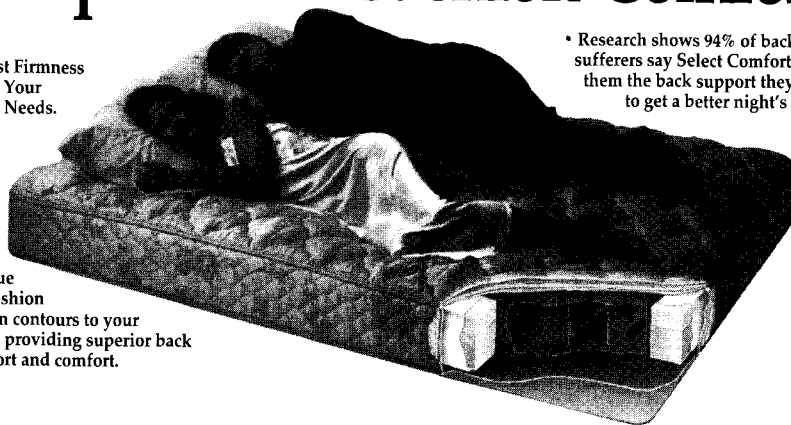


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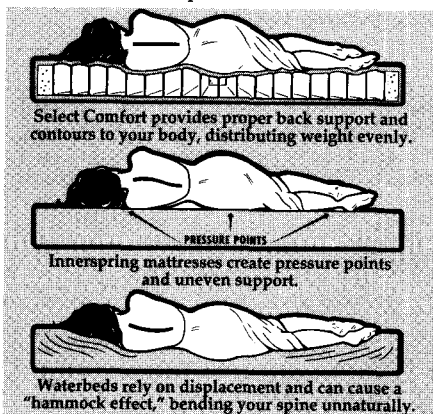
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apiece for a series "retelling famous stories" from *Anna Karenina* to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*? The famous author, former Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Admiralty, not only didn't disdain this ludicrous hackwork; he characteristically farmed the pieces out to be ghostwritten by his friend Edward Marsh, and paid him £25 of the £300.

In any case, his writing was almost always hackwork in the sense that it was written for money, and often enough in terms of quality also. One of his sharper critics was Evelyn Waugh, who—through his fictional alter ego Guy Crouchback—"knew of Mr Churchill only as a professional politician, a master of sham-Augustan prose, a Zionist, an advocate of the Popular Front in Europe, an associate of the press-lords and of Lloyd George." Whatever else may be said about this revealing catalogue of abuse, it is hard to disagree with the phrase about his prose, or to defend Churchill (despite his Nobel Prize for Literature) as a great writer. And even with his huge income from writing he was in perennial financial difficulties, and was often heavily in debt to one or another of his shady millionaire associates.

He had other human failings. He was a more or less faithful husband, but a bad father: only one of his four children who lived to adulthood—Mary, Lady Soames—turned out a safe and sound human being, the other three all careering off the rails. He had deplorable taste in friends, was in general a bad judge of men whether politicians or generals, and surrounded himself with chancers and mountebanks, from Beaverbrook to Birkenhead to Brendan Bracken, all of whom his wife, Clementine—a much better judge—reprobated, not least because they encouraged his tendency to dissipation. (It is hard to fault the almost admiring Boston-Irish description of him as "a fine two-handed drinker," Joseph Kennedy's phrase.)

He was often a poor judge of events as well. To understand his unpopularity—the disrepute in the 1930s which caused so many to resist him as Prime Minister until the last moment—it is necessary to understand this. The Labour Party hated Churchill as the bellicose bully of Tony-pandy in 1910, when a miners' strike was put down, and of the General Strike of 1926, while the respectable upper classes deplored him as an unprincipled bounder. Edward VII had thought him "a born

## PUZZLER CONTEST

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cad," a verdict echoed over and again by his contemporaries. Far from being the tale of a giant unrecognized by pygmies, his "wilderness years" of the 1930s seem a shattering sequence of misjudgments, from his opposition to the India Bill to his attempt to keep the wretched Edward VIII on the throne. And all of this made it easier to discount his opposition to Hitler.

As late as 1940 R. A. Butler, a middle-of-the-road Conservative who subsequently nearly became Prime Minister, bitterly lamented the way "the good clean tradition of English politics" had been usurped by "the greatest adventurer of modern political history," "a half-breed American" (significant term of abuse!); while even John Colville, who was to become a close colleague of Churchill's, wondered whether he was not "too unstable" to be Prime Minister.

They were wrong, wonderfully wrong, mercifully wrong. In a famous passage from *The Second World War*, Churchill wrote that in May of 1940 it seemed that his whole life had been a preparation for the moment: "I felt as if I were walking with destiny." He was right, splendidly right. At that moment everything fell into place. Even his failings became "good faults," not least the sham-Augustan prose, which worked as never before or after. And because of that meeting with destiny, nothing else about his life matters in the end. The savior of his country? But of course he was, and of European civilization, too. As David Reynolds says in the Austin book, in what might almost be a direct reproach to John Charmley, "The Churchill of 1940 is great enough to survive both the hagiographers and the historians." ☼

## BRIEF REVIEWS



### The Unknown Modigliani

by Noël Alexandre.  
Abrams, 464 pages, \$75.00  
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Amedeo Modigliani arrived in Paris in 1906, determined on a career as an artist and undeterred by a history of tuberculosis. He was twenty-two. In a year or so he became a friend of Paul Alexandre, a young doctor (he was twenty-six) with a great enthusiasm for painting and sculpture. In fact, Alexandre rented a house where his artist friends were always welcome as casual, or at times permanent, guests. Modigliani joined the circle, and Alexandre was for some years his only buyer, a patron whose admiration led him to beg Modigliani "not to destroy a single sketchbook or a single study." As a result of that arrangement Noël Alexandre inherited from his father, who never did get around to writing the tribute to Modigliani that he intended, a mass of sketches,

letters, and related information concerning Modigliani's early days in Paris. This material has been in storage for more than half a century, and its emergence will greatly benefit students of Modigliani's work. Mr. Alexandre himself believes that many people imagine the artist to have been a dissipated irresponsible who knocked off fine paintings between orgies. If any such ideas do exist, this text should correct them, for the letters Mr. Alexandre quotes reveal a hardworking painter and sculptor who took his art seriously and took life with grace and humor despite minimal sales and precarious health. The text does have one deficiency. The author, having quoted a letter, proceeds to paraphrase its entire contents instead of merely explaining the points that demand clarification. This is a trivial annoyance given the illustrations, which occupy the better part of the volume and show how Modigliani worked out ideas—simplifying here, elaborating there, distorting and correcting—making dozens of versions of



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**The Story of Zahra**

by Hanan al-Shaykh.  
Doubleday/Anchor,  
215 pages, \$18.00.

**M**s. al-Shaykh is an Arab author who was brought up in Beirut, where her novel is principally set. The tale concerns a young woman whose early encounters with deceit and family violence have caused her to withdraw into a taciturnity from which she emerges only to throw useless tantrums and take self-destructive actions. The last and worst of these is an alliance with a gunman during the Lebanese civil war. The author conveys the atmosphere of that war, as experienced by her neurotic heroine, effectively, as she does that of a stagnating colony of Lebanese political exiles in Africa. Zahra herself, however, remains too remote to arouse either real sympathy or much understanding. Her dubiously reliable uncle and her brother, an aimless young man who finds self-importance in the fighting, are, when their voices are heard, more distinct as characters. The novel clearly asserts the demoralizing influence of the war, but since Zahra was demoralized before the war began, the reader confronts an ambiguous purpose.

**Genet**

by Edmund White. Knopf,  
778 pages, \$35.00.

**J**ean Genet (1910–1986), well known and highly respected in the experimental and iconoclastic literary world, had so many reasons for his hatred of all entrenched authority that it is simpler to mention his one reason for thinking well of the system. While she lived, his foster mother treated the orphan kindly. Genet was subsequently rather reluctant to admit that, preferring to have admirers like Jean Cocteau and Jean-Paul Sartre see him purely as an abused outsider with a savagely clear view of society's injustices. He was a highly complicated, contradictory, devious, and brilliant man, and Mr. White's biography presents his achievements with impressive research and admirable writing.

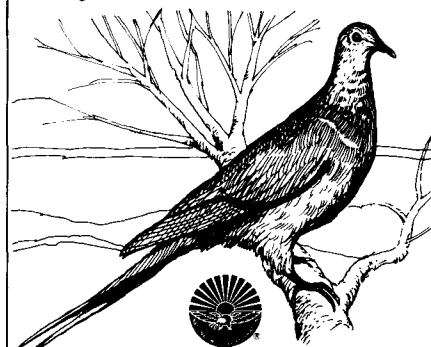
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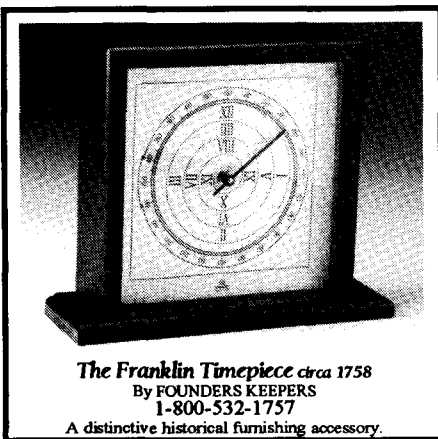
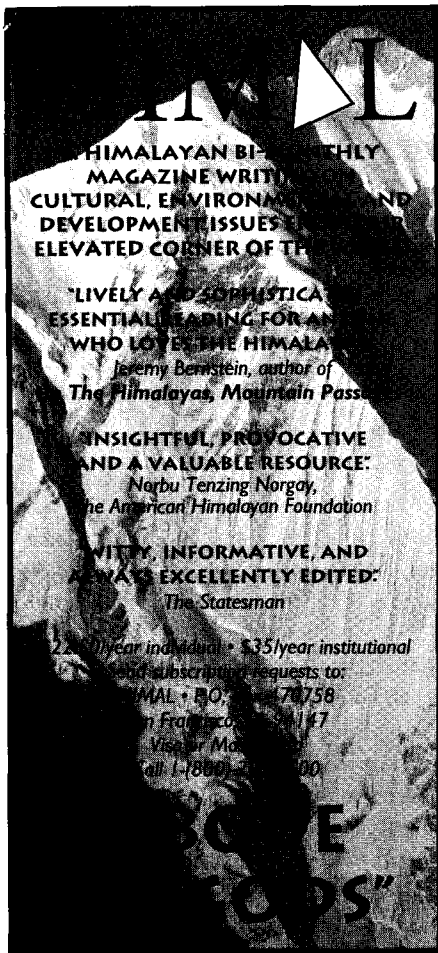
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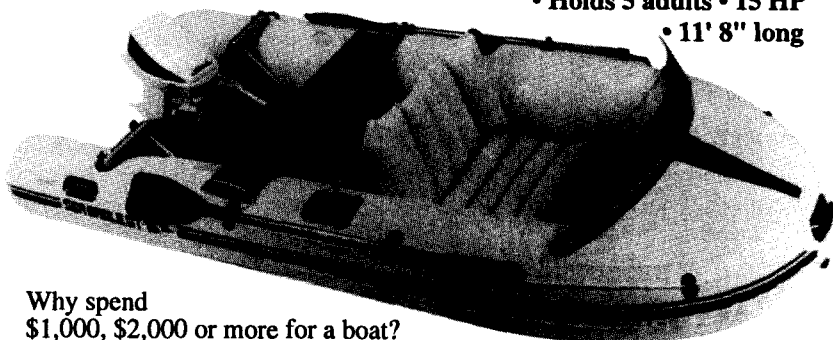


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## ANSWERS TO THE JANUARY PUZZLER

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | L | O | W | P | O | K | E | A | E | R | Y |
| T | I | N | C | A | N | N | D | E | L | I | A |
| A | V | E | O | R | F | E | E | L | F | O | R |
| N | E | W | B | O | N | E | W | H | I | T | E |
| D | R | A | B | L | Y | P | Y | C | N | O | F |
| I | D | Y | L | E | B | A | S | H | F | U | L |
| S | I | N | E | W | E | D | B | E | I | S | E |
| H | L | H | R | I | L | D | U | E | N | D | E |
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| E | M | P | I | R | E | S | L | E | I | P | E |
| A | M | P | L | E | V | L | E | D | G | E | R |
| R | A | Y | E | D | E | S | T | R | O | Y | S |

### "Theme and Variations"

Variations on HAPPY: DOC, DOPEY, and BASHFUL (other dwarfs); on NEW: BONE WHITE, ONE-WAY, and SINEWED (words containing NEW); on YEAR: AERY, YARE, and RAYE (anagrams). Across. 1. S(LOW)POKE 10. T-INCAN 12. DELI-A 13. F(EEL)FO-R (rev.) 16. DR-ABLY 26. DU(EN)D 28. Y-EARNINGS 30. E(MP)IRE'S 31. (S)AMPLE 32. L-EDGE-R 34. (O)DES-TROY'S Down. 1. S-TAN-DISH 2. LIVE-R 4. PA ROLE (pun) 5. K(N)EEP-AD 7. EL(F)IN (rev.) 8. RIO-TO-US 11. COBBLER (double def.) 12. DEWY (homophone) 17. CHEESED (anag.) 18. FLEE-CERS 19. DI(LEM)MA (rev.) 20. BE(LIE-V)E 22. BUG-LET 23. IN(D)IGO 25. IN RE (anag.)

generally helpful, but there are moments when a non-U reader may feel like one stranded on a rainy weekend in a remote country house with nothing to read but Debrett. Such moments are rare. Mitford's letters are, overall, a lively, observant, agreeably acid record of her particular time and class.

### Sixty-nine

by Ryu Murakami,

translated by Ralph F. McCarthy.

Kodansha, 192 pages,

\$20.00.

Mr. Murakami's novel covers the year 1969, which Ken, his first-person narrator, devotes to disturbing the peace of his high school, enticing his friends to similar misbehavior, pursuing a girl known as Lady Jane, and concocting an arts festival—all quite understandable activities for a seventeen-year-old brat stuck in a moribund provincial city under the grim eye and violent hand of the Japanese education system. By his own reminiscent admission, Ken's avant-garde aestheticism is a pose designed to attract general attention and specifically female interest. To be a virgin at seventeen, he confides, "is nothing to be . . . particularly ashamed of, but it's something that weighs on your mind." Ken chatters of Sartre and Marx and Proust, whose works he has not read, and of French directors whose films he has not seen. He is a superb and very funny bluffer, and one sympathizes with him all the way.

### Wild and Beautiful Sable Island

by Pat and Rosemarie Keough.

Nimbus/Chelsea Green,

104 pages, \$25.95.

Sable Island is known, if at all, as the Graveyard of the Atlantic. According to an elderly Nova Scotian, "There's noth'n out there but sand, seals, wild horses and shipwrecks." The Keoughs found all of those, plus the remains of lifesaving stations, interesting bird and plant life, and old photographs to supplement their own fine color shots. The place is indeed wild and beautiful, and since it is very nearly inaccessible, this small book provides a convenient view.

—by Phoebe-Lou Adams

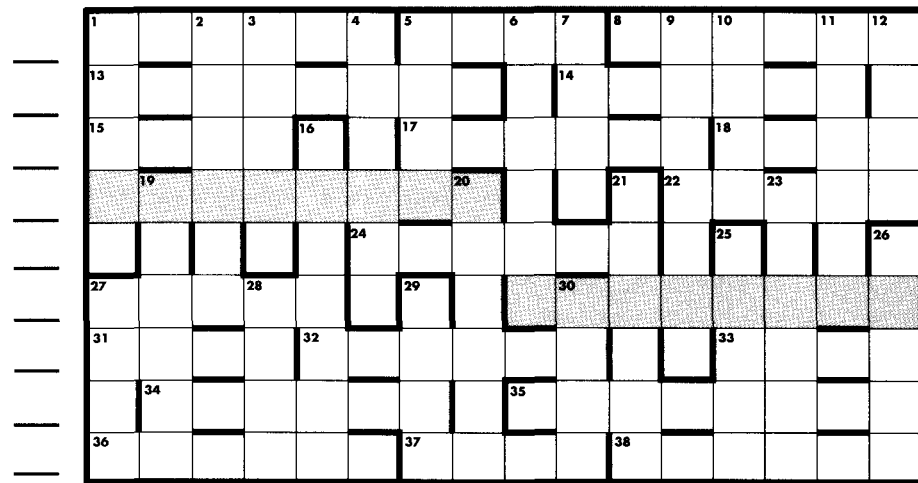


# THE PUZZLER

by Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon

## Comings and Goings

Nine answers to Across clues (one per row) contribute a letter apiece to the blanks at the left side of the diagram. These nine letters, from top to bottom, show what comes out. Sixteen answers to Down clues skip over the shaded squares; but each of those entries forms a new term if a letter is added to the shaded square. Definitions of the new entries thus formed have been added in no special order to the sixteen clues not otherwise involved in these shady comings and goings. (The additional definitions may occur anywhere within those clues.) In the finished diagram the shaded squares will be seen to show what could be added. Answers to clues include two proper nouns and a common foreign word; new entries include one proper noun.



See page 122 for Puzzler contest details. The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 126.

### Across

1. Old men describing origin of shadowy monoliths in plains
5. Ball game error, trapping toss
8. Lying down aboard barque, as you're rather seasick
13. Times are rough in Islamic island realms
14. Brighter litigant obtaining backing of bar
15. Children of pompous folks going around town in the West
17. Fitting, a screw turned that way
18. Opera star, guest at a banquet, occupies most of couch
22. Eviction tore us apart
24. Flapping hen atop old car
27. Rough sea is coming on the heels of Democratic platforms
31. Motivate through tipsy cheering
32. Unstable, Hamlet calls a woman's name
33. Coquettes spread cheer and love

34. With pangs of guilt, beheaded yellowish birds
35. Vegetable bed a baron cultivated (*two words*)
36. Signal turn to the right around tracks heading west
37. Boats at the front glided most of the way through wetland
38. Girl spread story about equine

### Down

1. Father of France taking part in operetta (4)
2. Famous ship's ignoring chief of all underwater hazards (5)
3. Arguments for experts (4)
4. *Dances With Wolves* ultimately favored ones from the rear (5)
5. Cattle are standing around pasture (3)
6. Stood in train finally entering tunnel (5)
7. With special insight, soaks yellow spot (4)
9. Sound confused about slice of lemon in stock (6)

10. After starting diet, fixes goals (4)
11. Cut apart free verse (5)
12. Vote for strict Republican term (4)
16. Protester of a sort less likely to budge (6)
19. Water is essentially crossed by rebels (5)
20. Give a pained cry, having gained a couple of pounds (5)
21. Look at California, being in the neighborhood (5)
23. Accepting loss, wraps up game pieces (5)
25. Call for help, apprehending snatch of baby's cries (4)
26. American author eating Northern food found in the South (4)
27. Empty whirlpool bath drain backed up in part of a church (4)
28. Cure sickly, pale-colored flowers (4)
29. Ship astern of *Maine* in a spot of trouble, as such (4)
30. Furnish a room (3)

**Note:** The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped long envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

# WORD WATCH

by Anne H. Soukhanov

**casino feet** *noun*, soreness and swelling in the feet and legs of people who stand immobile or nearly so for long periods: "Foot problems among workers and gamblers at . . . casinos are 'reaching epidemic proportion,' says a podiatrist who calls the painful condition 'casino feet' . . . 'Actually, we could name this problem for anyone who stands in one place for a long time with very little movement,' [Dr. Leonard Hymes] said. 'It could also just as easily be called *bank teller's foot*, *assembly line foot* or *security guard foot*'" (Associated Press). **BACKGROUND:** *Casino feet* comes about because prolonged standing tires muscles in the feet and legs and can restrict the flow of blood to those regions, leading to phlebitis and varicose veins. It joins a host of terms about physical complaints which combine a noun referring to the condition's cause with one denoting the affected site or the result: think of *trench foot*, *tennis elbow*, *jock itch*, *diaper rash*, and *motion sickness*.

**FlashBake** *trademark*, a computerized oven that uses bursts of highly concentrated visible and infrared light from quartz bulbs to cook food almost instantly from the inside out and brown it on the surface: "Steak and salmon cooked in the *FlashBake* in less than two minutes and

*A selection of terms that have newly been coined, that have recently acquired new currency, or that have taken on new meanings, compiled by the executive editor of The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition.*

were well seared and exceedingly juicy" (*New York Times*).

**BACKGROUND:** The *FlashBake* oven was developed by Quadlux, Inc., of Fremont, California, and introduced at the National Restaurant Show last year. Observers praised both its short cooking times—twenty to thirty seconds for a bagel, forty to fifty seconds for a pizza, 110 seconds for a chicken breast—and the high quality of the resulting food: pizza crusts, for example, emerge crisp and lightly browned. The *FlashBake* generates as much as 5,500° F of heat (its food-viewing window is made of welders' glass); still, it uses less electricity than a conventional oven. Priced at \$7,500–\$9,500, the *FlashBake* has so far been adopted by hotels, hospitals, and food businesses. Quadlux hopes eventually to market a home version for about \$1,000.

**ghost rider** *noun*, a person who pretends to have been a passenger aboard a mass-transit vehicle that was involved in an accident, and who files an insurance claim for injuries said to have been sustained: "For some

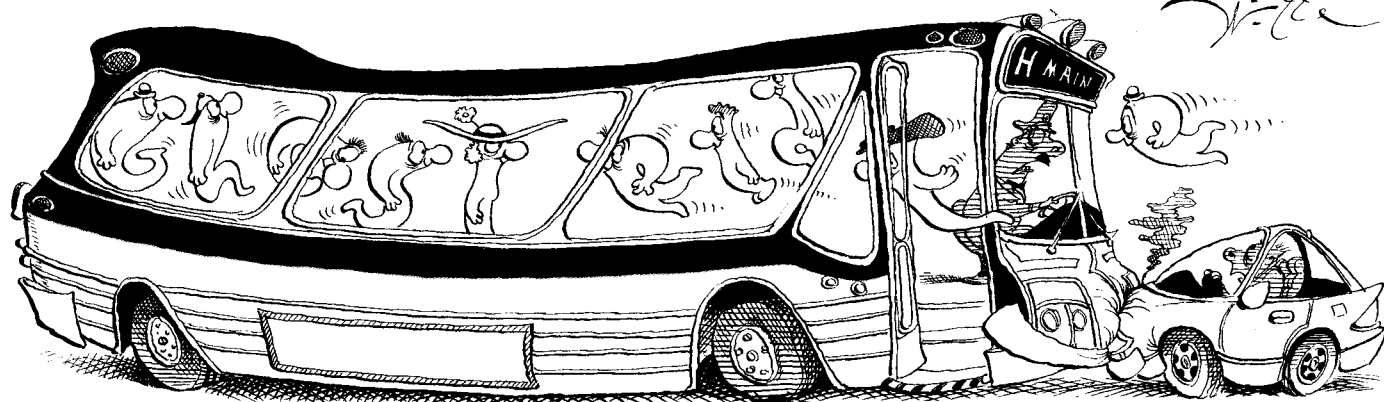
time, mass transit operators have worried about a growing phenomenon: 'ghost riders,' people. . . [who] often race on board and claim they were victims" (*New York Times*).

**BACKGROUND:** *Ghost riders* can be divided into two categories: *jump-ons*, who join the bona fide passengers (and are recorded as such) at the time of the accident, and *add-ons*, who were never even at the scene. The fraud they perpetrate, which is difficult to prove without surveillance and stings, may cost insurers as much as hundreds of millions of dollars a year. Compounding the problem are *runners*, hired by some attorneys and physicians to travel to the scenes of accidents (which they may identify by scanning the police radio), distribute brochures that provide phone numbers, and encourage passengers to say they have been injured. Given a sufficient delay in police response, some *runners* become *ghost riders* themselves.

**Sovok** *noun, slang*, a cynical, irresponsible, lazy, and amoral person, a product of the former Soviet system, regarded as an im-

pediment to social and economic reconstruction in Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union: "A *Sovok* is 'Soviet Man'—not as the ideologists conceived him, but as he actually turned out. . . Outwardly respectful of authority, a *Sovok* will think nothing of stealing from the state or cheating his neighbor. A *Sovok* is everything Russians despise about themselves" (*Washington Post*).

**BACKGROUND:** *Sovok*, pronounced "suh-vok," comes from a common noun of the same spelling which means "dustpan." It is used, especially by members of the so-called Lost Generation—those born during the last years of Stalinism—in derisive reference to a regime they were taught to revere but later considered worthless. To survey important Russian borrowings into English over the past forty years is to survey the major passages in Soviet life. *Sputnik*, from 1957, marked the beginning of the Space Age race between the two great powers. In the 1960s and mid-1970s came *gulag* (a network of forced-labor camps) and *zek* (a labor-camp inmate), by way of the novels of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Next came *nomenklatura*, the system of high-level Soviet pork-barreling and the members of the class that benefited from it. And in the mid-1980s, of course, came *perestroika* and *glasnost*.





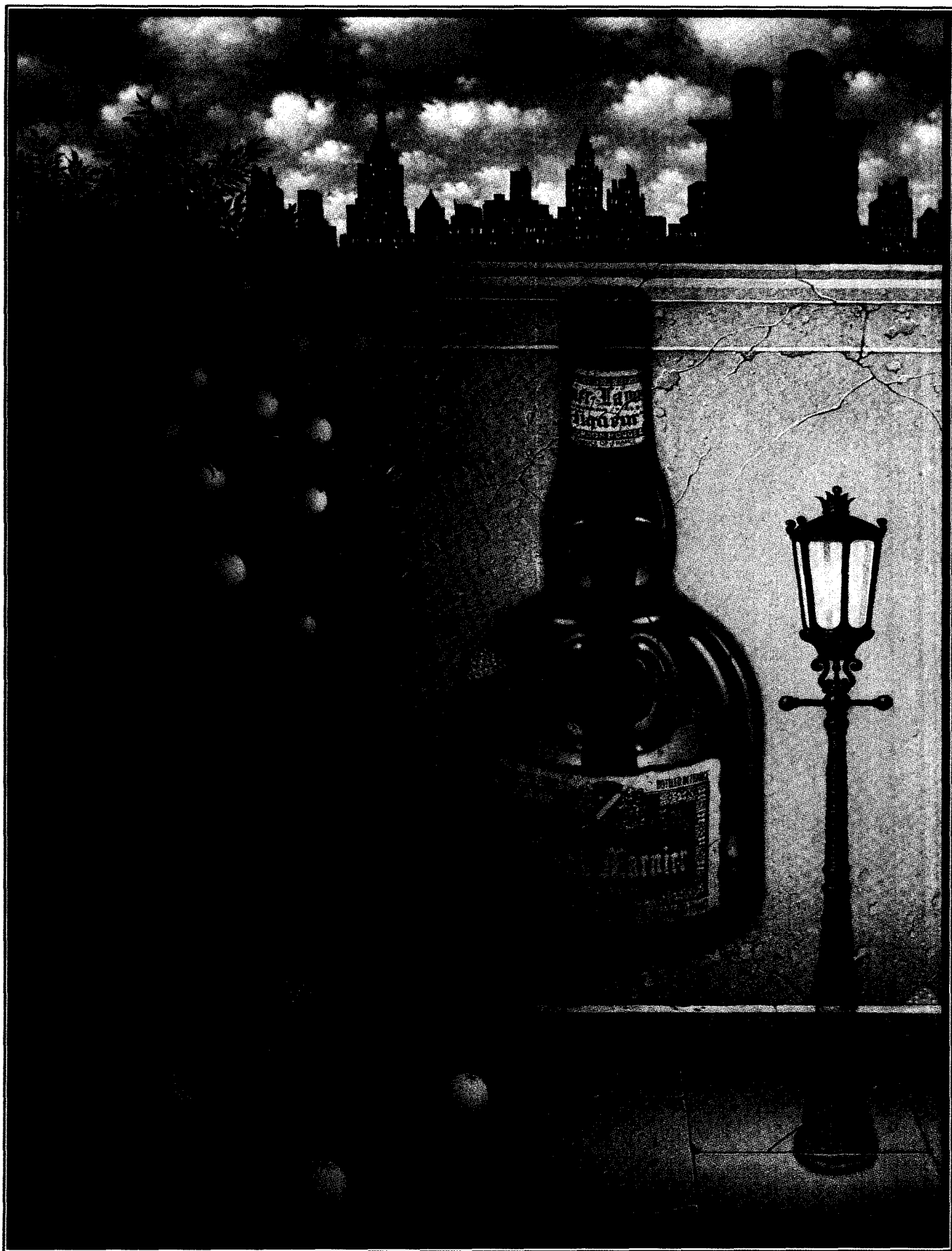


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